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## IL FILOSTRATO



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# IL FILOSTRATO

THE STORY OF THE LOVE OF TROILO

AS IT WAS SUNG IN ITALIAN BY

GIOVANNI BOCCACCIO

AND IS NOW TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH VERSE

BY HUBERTIS CUMMINGS

*E voi amanti prego che ascoltiate*



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 PREFACE
 

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THIS translation of Boccaccio's *Filostrato* has not been prepared with a purpose primarily of adding to the rich storehouse of English poetry. To add further ornament to English Literature would at any time be most difficult; but to seek to add at a point where Chaucer has already made the supreme contribution in his *Troilus and Criseyde* would be the height of temerity. In that poem, more than five hundred years ago, appeared the best gift that the *Filostrato*, its chief source, could hope to make to lovers of story in English verse.

Yet my work upon the translation of the old Italian narrative poem on which Chaucer's tale of the unhappy love of Troilus is founded, and upon a translation of it into English verse, has not been without purpose. Two of "the all Etruscan Three" of whom Byron, reviewing the history of the great men of Florence, sings in *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*,

Dante, and Petrarch, and, scarce less than they,  
The Bard of Prose, creative spirit! he  
Of the Hundred Tales of love.

are familiar figures in English Literature. He who lists may read Dante and Petrarch from their own lips speaking in English poetry. But it is not so with the "Bard of Prose." He seldom speaks to us in the language of English verse. We have been introduced to

him in poetry, to be sure, by Chaucer in *The Clerk's Tale*, by Longfellow in his story of *The Falcon of Ser Federigo* in the *Tales from a Wayside Inn*, and by Tennyson in his little poetic drama, *The Falcon*; but there after all, however charming the English verses that have introduced Boccaccio, we have met him only as the "Bard of Prose," the author of the *Decamerone*. And it may be believed that Chaucer thought, as he maintained, that he was introducing to us only the work of

Fraunceys Petrark, the laureat poete

when he wrote the Clerk's tale of the patient Griselde. As a "Bard of Verse"—translated English verse for Italian verse—we have then met Boccaccio the poet only in a few modest and little known sonnet translations by Dante Gabriel Rossetti. It has been largely the hope of this present translation that it might introduce him anew to English readers as a poet. For the fact that Boccaccio is best known, and should be best known in English as the airy and graceful narrator of the famous *novelle* should not debar him from the privilege of being known more largely to us in our own language in that capacity. The author of the *Decamerone*, the first great student and critic of Dante, the friend and intimate of Petrarch, the writer of an ardent defense of poetry in one of the books of his *De Genealogiis Deorum*—and so an ancestor in criticism of Sir Philip Sidney and Percy Bysshe Shelley, Boccaccio has, it seems to me, for his very achievements' sake deserved a ranking among the poets. May it be the good fortune of this text of the *Filostrato* to bring him a little nearer to that place in the English language!

But my work has had, too, a more practical and less ambitious purpose. I have wished to make it possible

for students of Chaucer more readily to compare *Troilus and Criseyde* with the story of Troilo, as Boccaccio told it, that they more properly may appraise the merits of both narratives, the English and the Italian. There has been a tendency toward belief that Chaucer's is a preeminently superior work, more realistic in action and character portrayal, richer in humour, and more mature in wisdom. That such is not invincibly the case I hope may be revealed here. Boccaccio's work is not sheer romance. The *Filòstrato* may deserve the name of metrical romance which is frequently given to it, and it may be written in *ottava rima*, but it is, for all those facts, a poem that is written with the clearest psychological truth to human character and one that exhibits many a sly touch of satire and worldly wisdom. At times, too, it has a piquancy that even Chaucer's geniality does not entirely transcend. It is different in manner from *Troilus and Criseyde* rather than distinctly inferior in quality.

Considered independently, *Il Filòstrato* is a simple forthright narrative of a disappointment in love. It is without intricacy in plot and is devoid of affectation in style. Unlike *La Teseide*, in time of composition Boccaccio's next poetic work, it makes no effort to be either epic or pseudo-epic. The beautiful Homeric similes with which the poet ornaments that latter poem are lacking in the story of Troilo. The magic, the supernaturalism, and the glamour of high adventure with which contemporary metrical romance was everywhere replete have no part in it. It is an unadorned story of love and pain. To produce genuine and poignant passion it relies only on simplicity; for although it is in poetry, its style possesses much of the *naïveté* of the prose of the *Decamerone*, and so is never unworthy of the master narrator of the "Hundred Tales of love."

Of the four chief characters that appear in *Il Filostrato* much might be said. But a little mention, here, of Troilo, Griseida, Pandaro, and Diomedes will suffice.

Troilo is but a genuine manifestation of youth—youth of Romeo's cast. Ironic, arrogant, defiant in the presence of love in the beginning though he is, his impressionability leads him, as it has a habit of leading youth, to a very sudden fall. He succumbs to the charms of Griseida and to love, and he succumbs wholly. Thereafter he is alternately gay or despondent lover. His joy has all the exaltation of youth for a time, and the pain that follows has all the intensity of the first genuine bitterness that comes with the first complete disillusionment of youth. When presently he fears his Griseida has been taken from him, his bliss removed, he draws his dagger on himself; as, figuratively at least, youth is ever prone to wield its weapon when its first mental agony makes death appear its only possible relief. But, if he represents the weakness of youth, he represents, too, its valour and its constancy. After his mistress has been sent away from Troy to the Greeks, he loves loyally and he fights valiantly. When final conviction of Griseida's infidelity comes upon him, his cup of bitterness is filled. There is nothing to do but like a man to seek revenge on Diomedes and to court death bravely on the field of battle. And both these things he does with a will.

Griseida (changed in the text of the translation to Criseis) is but womanhood, fair and frail—or, as Boccaccio usually conceives it to be, frail whether it be fair or otherwise. She is a lovely creature, frightened at first by the ardent advances of Troilo, later delighted with his adoration, supremely happy in her hours of dalliance with him, prostrated with grief when she learns that they must part, confident that she can win her way back to her lover from the tents



of the Greeks, and serene in her belief in her own impeccable constancy. But presently she fails Troilo and gives her love to Diomede. That is all her story as Boccaccio sees it.

Pandaro portrays at once the charms and the insufficiencies of boon companionship. He is a graceful figure, witty, fond of pleasure, possessed of an indulgent and unscrupulous eye for the follies and the vices of youth, full of raillery, and when all goes well, full of invention. He can turn every trick in a successful lover's favour. But, when misery comes on, when Griseida must leave Troy, and when finally she abandons Troilo for the love of another, Pandaro, like every boon companion, is helpless. He can, it is true, wrest a knife away from a despairing lover and keep him from taking his own life; but he can offer him no true and efficacious comfort. He can only look on impotently and pathetically at Troilo's suffering.

Diomede, of whom we see little and who is abruptly, if not crudely, introduced by Boccaccio, is a combination of charm and dare-deviltry. He might be painted very black, but the poet does not really deal with him in that colour. When first he sees Griseida and, with true and immediate insight, perceives that she is in love with Troilo, he sighs to think that so fair a woman should already be in love, and doubts regretfully his own ability to make a conquest of her with that disadvantage to overcome. But with Diomede a woman is a woman, and a game is a game: the more obstacles the better sport! With a zest he enters into the hazard of the venture, and with grace and clever speech he wins. For his robbing of Troilo justice and honour cannot commend him; but for his winning of the game the young Greek cannot be utterly despised.

About the translation itself a few words must be said.

It has been made stanza for stanza in English *ottava rima*, but with one notable variation. The last line of the stanza (which is usually made, like all the other seven, one of iambic pentameter) has here been regularly converted into an alexandrine, like the last verse of a Spenserian stanza. The assuming of this liberty has made somewhat easier the task of translating stanza for stanza, rhyme scheme for rhyme scheme; and it has not unpleasantly altered the iambic rhythm.

A few further liberties have been taken, too, in the language used. Archaism is sometimes resorted to in such terms as *ruth*, *bent*, *pent*, *joyaunce*, *pleasaunce*, and *gentillesse*. The Italian verb *disse* and similar indefinite verbs employed by Boccaccio to introduce direct discourse have been, as a rule, translated by more expressive verbs in the English. Such colloquial forms as *I'd*, *I've*, *thou'ldst*, and the like have also been often admitted. This liberty I have assumed was justifiable in view of the frequent colloquial character of Boccaccio's own text and the perennial elision that one finds in it as in all Italian poetry. And in the translation of a poem that belongs to the *genre* of romance it has not seemed presumptuous to refer to the several male characters of *Il Filoſtrato* with the terms *knight* or *prince*.

Such as it is, then, the translation must be sent into the world, like its original and like Chaucer's great *Troilus and Criseyde*, with a few pleas for indulgence. I cannot, like Chaucer, bid it go

And kis the steppes, wher-as thou seest pace  
Virgile, Ovyde, Omer, Lucan, and Stace;

I cannot commend it to a "moral Gower"; nor can I piously pray over it to the "oon, and two, and three." Modern usage forbids me to send it either as a poetic form of reproach to a Fiammetta or as a

## PREFACE

xI

prayer in token of love and adoration. But perhaps I may send it to the student of Chaucer and Boccaccio with the supplication

. . . che ti presti  
Tanto di grazia ch'ascoltata sii.

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August, 1922*



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## IL FILOSTRATO





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## CANTO ONE

---

SOME poets, Lady, still of Jove do crave<sup>1</sup>  
Fair favour for poetic enterprise;  
Others invoke Apollo's aid to save  
Their fragile verse. E'en I, with frequent sighs,  
Besought Parnassian Muses, all too grave,  
My theme to lift through music to the skies;  
But Love, who changed old use, doth now require  
I seek thine aid alone my true song to inspire.

Thou, Lady, art that clear and lovely light<sup>2</sup>  
Which in the darkness still my life illumines;  
And thou that only star serenely bright  
Whose ray, across the mountains, sweet assumes  
The guidance of my bark from storm and night  
Till anchored there, where joyous comfort blooms,—  
With thee,—who art my Phoebus,—art my Jove,—  
My Muse,—and all the good I feel and know of Love!

Lady, thy absence now, to me a woe<sup>3</sup>  
Greater than death itself, constrains my will  
To write the grievous life of Troilo  
Whenafter Criseis, who caused his ill,  
Was forced, yet all in love with him, to go  
Outside the Trojan walls, ere either fill  
Of amorous delights had known; so, wise,  
Thy puissant aid I seek for this my enterprise!

4

Whence, Lady fair,—whose faithful servitor  
 I e'er have been, whose subject ever hence  
 Shall be,—and thy fair eyes' refulgent store  
 Of light, where Love my every joy of sense  
 Hath placed,—my only hope,—I thee implore,  
 As one who loves thee than himself much more,—  
 With perfect love,—guide thou my hand aright,  
 Direct my mind in what my soul hath come to write.

5

In my sad heart thou art so effigied  
 Thou hast become more potent there than I.  
 O bring my voice then from my heart, I plead,  
 So sad it shall through sorrow's tones descry  
 My own deep grief in Troil's woes, and start  
 Whoever hears to pity of my need.  
 And if men listen, be the honour thine,  
 The praise thy words shall win—the labour be but mine!

6

And ye, O lovers, now I pray attend  
 The tale my tear-brimmed cantos would rehearse;  
 And, if perchance in your hearts doth extend  
 A spirit rising piteous to my verse,  
 I pray you pray that Amor succour lend  
 To me, like Troil, neath a heavy curse  
 Of grief, in that I live afar from her  
 Who would in every mind sweet joy and pleasaunce stir.

7

The kings of Greece besieged in full array  
 The ample walls of Troy, and all in pride  
 Of armour blazoned rich abode the fray,  
 Ardent and eager-proud (as each descried  
 The power Greece acquired from day to day).  
 They showed themselves in one great wish allied—  
 T' avenge the insult and the bold rapine  
 By Paris done, of Helen, Menelaus' queen.

## 8

When Calchas (that famed seer whose science high  
Had merited full oft Apollo's trust  
And won him sager knowledge from the sky)  
With will to learn inquired which party must  
Expect to win at last,—if victory  
To Trojans' suffering long or Grecians' lust  
In battle, meed should be; and, waiting, heard  
The war assured Troy's doom, a bitter cruel word!

## 9

And, knowing now her hosts would all be slain  
And Troy ere long destroyed, the cunning seer  
Resolved on sudden flight, and, counsel ta'en  
Duly of time and place, rode slyly near  
The Grecian lines; and there upon the plain  
Full many Greeks, on seeing him appear,  
Arose to welcome him with faces bright,—  
Hoping his wit might help, should theirs come evil plight.

## 10

Great was the uproar in the Trojan town  
When Rumour on her eager wings had sped  
The news abroad: "Our wary prophet's frown  
No more can warn us now, for he is fled,—  
A traitor proved and to the Greeks gone down!"  
Then, by his crime inflamed and fury-led,  
The crowd was scarce restrained from vengeance dire,—  
And feeling flared up quick to set his house on fire.

## 11

Calchas in that ill hour's evil case,  
All uninformed of his intended flight,  
Had left behind in that quick-hostile place  
An only widowed daughter, fair as light,—  
No mortal thing but one of angel's grace  
She seemed, and Criseis named, to human sight  
The loveliest of all Troy's womanhood,  
Dainty and lissome, wise, most chastely true and good.

12

Who, learning soon all dolorous the cause  
Of that rude outcry,—Calchas' treachery,  
For all that furious hubbub made no pause  
But rose, donned mourning habit tearfully,—  
Like one who tow'rd an altar suppliant draws,  
And, seeking Hector, fell to bended knee  
Bemoaning Calchas' guilt with piteous face—  
The while she guiltless begged the prince might lend her  
grace.

13

Great Hector was by nature pitiful,  
And, hearing there that lady's weeping plaint  
(Fairer than ladies fair by every rule  
She was), with measured speech and sweet restraint,  
Bade Criseis comfort take: "Thy father, fool  
In evil erring, be dismissed and faint  
Amid the Greeks!" quoth he, "But in security  
Dwell thou, fair lady, here as long as pleaseth thee.

14

"Such favours as thou wilt and honours, too,  
As if Sage Calchas still were here, receive  
For certain now; we grant them as thy due  
In every future need. Cease hence to grieve!  
But him may God with condign shame pursue!"  
And more to press her thanks, ere taking leave,  
He suffered Criseis not; whereat she rose  
And sought her mansion out and there more safe repose.

15

Such household there as fitted her estate,  
And to her honour, Criseis maintained  
The while she dwelt in Troy without debate,  
Modest in custom and in life unstained,  
Marvel of chasteness in her widow's state,  
Sans any child to be in 'haviour trained  
She was as free as maid still unpossessed—  
By all who knew her loved and by all richly blest.

16

So things progressed (as in war usually)  
Twixt Greeks and Trojans ever much the same;  
Ofttimes the Trojans came out valiantly,  
And, driving back the Greeks, earned praise and fame;  
Ofttimes the Greeks,—unless much history  
Doth err,—went at their foes with lusty game  
Up to their very moat,—and e'en inside  
They robbed, burned hall and villa, plundered far and  
wide.

17

And still the Trojans, hard as they were pressed  
By the high daring of their Grecian foes,  
Failed never once their reverence to attest  
In holy rites; but evermore they chose  
To keep their customs, and, as suppliants dressed,  
Crowded good Pallas' temple; where arose  
Many a solemn anthem in high praise,  
Many a Trojan's vow, his prayer, his reverent gaze!

18

For now fair spring had come, whose potent sway  
Reclothes the meads with flowers and grasses new,  
When every beast becomes both blithe and gay,  
And brings by divers acts his loves to view;  
When Trojan sires had bid such honours pay  
To the divine Palladium as were due.  
Ladies and knights joined that festivity  
In equal manner,—coming all most willingly.

19

Mongst others Calchas' daughter Criseis moved,  
Apparelled chastely in her russet weeds,  
Wherein, just as the rose hath ever proved  
Still fairer than the violet (which leads  
In beauty other flowers), that lady loved,  
Surpassed the fairest in her modest deeds  
And, by her presence near the temple door,  
Made goodlier yet that great fête's rich and goodly store.

20

When mid the throng, as youths are wont to do,  
Peering about the temple here and there,  
Prince Troilo approached with other few,  
And stopped and stood Troy's ladies to compare:  
"This one," he gan, "was fair, that one a shrew!"  
So praised or blamed,—like one who did not care,  
Like one to whom no maid could give delight  
Or youth who'd keep him free in every maid's despite.

21

In such a mood of scorn proceeding free,  
If he beheld a youth with languorous sigh  
Gazing upon a lady fixedly,  
The prince would to his comrades jesting cry:  
"Lo there a wretch who to his liberty  
Would set a bound,—it vexes him so nigh,—  
And in yon damsel's hand would bind it fain;  
Mark ye his thoughts, how idle-fond they are and vain!

22

"What is't in womankind faith to repose?  
Whose heart turns in one day a thousand ways,  
Like to a leaf if breeze upon it blows?  
Nor doth a lover's care within her raise  
One pang of grief; nor is there one who knows  
What silly whim shall next command her praise.  
O happy is the man who's never ta'en  
With idle love for her—who's brave yet to abstain!

23

"From mine own folly I have knowledge gained,  
Who suffered his curst flames in me to burn;  
So, said I now Love ne'er with me maintained  
A gracious mien but rather did me spurn,  
Giving me naught, my words were false and feigned;  
Yet Love's gifts, gathered, prove a poor return,—  
His cheer affords no boon of certain joy  
Compared with lovers' woes and lovers' sad annoy!

24

"That I am free my thanks I him accord  
Whose mercy proved far higher than my own,  
Almighty Jove, true deity and lord  
Of every grace to me,—who not o'erthrown  
By Love must live, but, glad to see adored  
Fair maids by other youths, may move alone  
Steering an easy course, and laugh to scorn  
All such pale, troubled lovers with their moods forlorn!"

25

O blindness of man's dull and earthly mind!  
Too oft the end will man's forethought belie  
And bring effect of far contrary kind!  
Satiric Troilo would fain decry  
Their silly faults whom love doth anxious bind,  
Nor dreams that Heav'n doth even now espy  
Some means to break his pride—that Love's sharp darts  
Will pierce him ere he from that festive temple parts.

26

Pursuing then Love's followers to deride,  
This one or that,—the while his idle gaze  
Reviewed the damsels there on every side,  
Perchance his wandering eye, with great amaze,  
Mid ladies fair hath Criseis espied  
Traversing daintily those throngéd ways,  
Her garb still russet neath a veil milkwhite,—  
In that so solemn festival a pleasing sight!

27

This Criseis was tall—of stately height  
Whereto her members were proportioned well;  
A beauty born of fair celestial might  
Adorned her winsome face, sans parallel.  
Yea, for her features shone serenely bright  
With womanly noblesse, when—subtly—fell,  
Touched by her arm, her mantle from her face,  
As 'twere to awe the crowd that swarmed about the place!



28

Which graceful gesture pleased young Troilo,  
So in the movement showed her dainty pride,—  
As if she said: "May not a wight stand so?"—  
And mute he gazed upon her face and stride,  
Which, as he looked, did ever fairer grow,—  
More worthy praise,—and now first he espied  
How sweet it is to gaze, in joy and grace,  
From soul to soul,—on lucent eyes and heavenly face.

29

And he no jot perceived, who'd been so shrewd  
Before to censure love in other men,  
That Amor, dwelling in the ray unviewed  
Of her bright eyes, aimed true his dart just then;  
Nor did that weapon, deep with love imbrued,  
Of his late taunts remind him once again  
What time he scorned Love's languorous retinue,  
For still of Love's sweet sting the prince but little knew.

30

Beneath her mantle's folds so pleasingly  
And peerless, too, the face of Criseis shone  
That Troil gazed thereon in ecstasy,  
Held by a cause he could not name, if known;  
Only he knew a high will now to see—  
To be less far—to keep his thoughts his own—  
To love and win! When Pallas' rites were past  
He stood there still—hardly his comrades stirred him at  
the last.

31

Not as he entered there so free and gay,  
The prince made exit from the temple now,  
But pensive, all enamoured,—went his way,—  
Beyond his own belief, with solemn vow  
To keep well hid his new desire, and say  
No word, nor that, his recent prate, allow  
Henceforth expressed, lest on himself be turned  
The ridicule his ardour would have meetly earned.



32

When from that spacious temple now had moved  
This Criseis, too, then changéd Troilo  
Joined his companions and the hours improved  
By making with them blithe and merry show,  
And tarried long—and that, his wound beloved,  
Better to hide, kept all his jests aglow  
O'er men that love, saying how differently  
His own heart fared; and bade all go and be as free.

33

At length, his comrades separating all,  
The prince sought out alone his chamber-room,  
And there to sighing let his fancy fall,  
Stretched on his bed, and now would fain resume  
The pleasure of his morning, fain recall  
The charming aspect of sweet Criseis' bloom,  
Counting the beauties of her lovely face,  
Commending this or that part for its charm and grace.

34

He praised her conduct and her stately size,  
Saying she showed her heart's munificence  
Both in her mien and gait; what high emprise  
To win a lady of such excellence,  
And have her love! O matchless, matchless prize,  
If to his wooing in pure innocence  
She could consent, could love as he loved now,  
And, smiling on her servant, accept her servant's vow!

35

He told himself no labour and no sigh  
Expended in her service could be lost,  
Thought his desire would win applause most high  
If told to friends who chanced him to accost,  
Reasoned his fellows would not now decry  
His love, knowing the pain wherein he tossed;  
Then gladly argued he could hold his peace,  
Unwitting how soon cheer and joyaunce cease.

36

Disposed to follow, then, such fair fortune,  
To act in everything discreet he planned,  
With thought to hide his ardour as a boon  
Too rich for common use by vulgar hand,—  
A thing conceived in amorous mind and tune,—  
From every friend, from every servant bland,  
Unless some need compel; for love, in truth,  
To many known brings joy with much commingled ruth.

37

Such thoughts and others now he entertained,  
How to disclose his love and how attract  
The favour of sweet Criseis, undisdained,—  
And, after this, conformed his every act  
To songs of hope and passion unrestrained;  
To love one lady only is his pact,  
Holding at naught all ladies seen before,—  
However they had pleased, they could not please him more.

38

And such a time to Love he turned his praise  
With piteous speech: "Fair Lord, thou dost possess  
The soul I claimed as mine in other days;  
But that thou ownst it now, I would confess,  
Doth please me well; yet, in my strange amaze,  
I know not if my heart is given less  
Goddess or dame to serve, so fair the may  
I saw in milkwhite veil and russet dress today!

39

"In her bright eyes thou hast thy dwelling place  
O verily my Lord, and it is meet  
Thou have it there; and therefore of thy grace  
I pray thee, Love, to hold my service sweet—  
Make it more thine, and on thy servant's case  
Look thou in pity, for prostrate at thy feet.  
My heart now lies, where thy darts struck it low,  
When out of Criseis' eyes they shot in one swift blow.

40

“My royal blood thy flames in no way spare;  
Nor yet the strength and courage of my mind;  
Nor for my hardihood aught do they care,—  
For Troilo’s sturdy frame with valour lined;  
They burn unchecked, like fire beyond compare  
Kindled mid matter dry and unconfined;  
And so they spread within this lover new  
That all his members they with love and heat endue.”

41

Thenceforth, from day to day, with fervent thought  
And pleasure thence derived, the prince prepared  
More dry and amorous fuel, fancy fraught  
Within his lofty heart, and even dared  
Imagine, too, from Criseis’ eyes was caught  
A balm to cool the flame therein that flared;  
So secret, then, to see them oft he tried,  
And how much more that fanned the flame he ne’er de-  
sried.

42

And now,—where’er his sojourn he might make,—  
Where’er he went or sat, by day or night,—  
Attended or alone for musing’s sake,—  
Eating or drinking,—still the lovely sight  
Of Criseis’ eyes his every thought would take;  
And e’er their beauty’s worth he would recite,  
Declaring her fair face would Helen’s shame  
And, certain, far surpass Polyxena’s in fame.

43

No single hour of the day now passed,  
Wherein he did not cry: “O gracious light  
(And this a thousand times) which lately hast  
Shone in my heart by Cupid’s grace and might,  
O Criseis fair, the wonder unsurpassed  
Of thy sweet face, which keeps me pale and white,  
Convert, somehow to pity; let it be  
My joy, my aid that springs alone—entire—from thee!”

44

And now his every erstwhile dream was fled,  
Of fame he might win in the mighty war,  
Of health or safety; and, of fancy led,  
Alone, within his breast the amorous lore  
Of his fair lady's virtue spoke instead;  
And, by it gladly stayed now more and more,  
He only yearned the wounds of love to cure,  
And to that task put all his mind and joyaunce pure.

45

From reveries of love he was not stirred  
E'en by his sharing in those battles fought  
And stern assaults fierce-joined at Hector's word,  
Wherein he with his brothers moved; but, caught  
With growing wonder, now the Trojans heard  
Or, as they followed, cheered his fierce onslaught,  
Or stopped to see the marvel flash in arms,  
His courage never daunted in the great alarms.

46

But 'twas no hate for Greeks that moved him so,  
Nor victory desired great Troy to free  
(Troy which he saw so straitened by her foe  
In that great siege); but in him, secretly  
His will still clutched at glory, urged him go  
Down in the field for Love's felicity,—  
Criseis' favour won! And, if the story's true,  
His mere approach the Greeks in mortal terrour threw.

47

And so had Amor robbed him of his sleep,  
His appetite depressed, and earnest thought  
So in him multiplied,—that pallour deep  
Spread o'er his face the while he toiled and fought  
As if it would belie his deeds and weep.  
But spite of it, with laughter feigned he sought,  
And speaking blithe, to cover up his pain,  
Till Troy believed 'twas only war he felt as bane.

48

Whate'er in all this still remains unsure,  
Whether Criseis did not once suspect  
The love this Troil strove to hide secure,  
Or feigning not to know it did elect,—  
This much is clear and must as truth endure  
That nothing, it appeared, the lady recked  
Of all the love her lover tow'rd her bore,  
But stood, like one unloved,—unsoftened,—evermore.

49

Whence Troilo such grievous dolour knew  
He could not name it e'en, and much he sighed  
Lest Criseis should with greater favour view  
Some other knight and therefore should deride  
His love, if known, and all his service true  
Reject; and now a myriad ways he tried,  
In his mind's eye to make his lady feel  
How honest was his love, how fervid and how real.

50

And then, when it had stung him thus a space,  
The prince began of Love to make a moan,  
Saying within: "Lo, Troil, there thy place,—  
Where thou didst others mock,—to stand alone!  
Ne'er was a lover brought so in disgrace  
Since how to keep from Love he had not known!  
'Thou'rt taken in the net thou censured hast:  
Because thou didst not wisely guard thee at the last!

51

"What will be said of thee mid other knights  
Who love, if this thy love becometh known?  
Will they not revel in new gibes and slights  
Or cry at thee: 'The railer's overthrown;  
No more so seer-like proud the prince indicts  
Our sighs and every low-breathed amorous moan;  
Behold the bitter bitten! Love be praised,  
Who to such end hath brought the scorner lately crazed!'

52

“ ’Mong men of prowess now what will be said  
Of thee, deemed once a lord of royal might,  
Once this is known? Displeased, it is no dread,  
They’ll cry: ‘Lo there our prince, the hare-brained wight,  
Gone from his mind—caught now by Love and led  
Ensnared away—in Troy’s sore hour of plight!—  
When in the war his valour should be brought,  
He stays—and lets Love’s fire consume his every thought!

53

“Would that, O thou most dolorous Troilo,—  
Since it is suffered thee to love one now,—  
Thou wert enamoured of some gentler foe  
Who, pitying, would console thee for thy vow,  
Feeling a love like thine; but Criseis lo,  
For whom thou sighst, will no sweet love allow  
Within her stony breast,—at evening, ice,—  
Though thou, like snow in fire, mayst melt within a trice.

54

“Would I were safe ashore within that port  
Whither my misadventure hasteneth me!  
’Twould prove my blessing and a high comfort,  
For dying there would end my mortal dree,  
Whereas, unknown as yet to all report,  
If mine unhappiness my comrades see,  
A thousand gibes will fill my life each day—  
And more,—I shall be called a blockhead every way.

55

“O aid me, Love, I plead! And thou for whom,  
Enchained now more than other knights, I weep,  
Vouchsafe some pity for thy lover’s doom,  
Who more than life loves thee with ardour deep;  
Turn thou thy face’s power to illume  
Upon thy knight; grant Love his way to keep,  
For in these sighs for thee he holds me strait;  
Refuse not kindness to my sad-despairéd state.

56

"Yet if thou must refuse my poor request,  
Like vernal bloom I'll early fade away;  
Waiting shall then no more my peace molest  
Nor seeing thy high pride my soul dismay;  
But should such course aggrieve thee, this behest,  
Ready in all to please, I crave today;—  
Cry, cruel: 'Slay thyself, Sir Troilo.'  
And I, to give thee pleasaunce, will do even so!"

57

This and full many other pleas he made  
Deep-plunged in sighs and weeping, calling out  
Her name like one whose love is undismayed  
Even in the uttermost of grief and doubt;  
But to his complaints he found no mercy stayed;  
All were but leaves, blown in the wind about  
And lost, none reaching Criseis' ear;  
And thence grew every day his torment and his fear.





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## CANTO TWO

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So<sup>1</sup> lasted many moons his pensive mood  
Till one day, in his chamber all alone,  
A Trojan youth, of courage high imbued  
And ancient lineage born, slipped in unknown  
And there his friend the woeful prince first viewed  
Melted to wretched tears and lying prone  
Upon his couch: and "How now, friend," he cried,  
"Doth this our bitter hour so conquering o'er thee ride?"

2  
And him the prince quick queried, "Pandaro,  
What chance hath led thee here to see me die?  
If to our friendship any debt thou owe,  
Away with thee! Begone! O let me lie  
Disconsolate, for this of truth I know,  
Of all my friends thou wouldst to see me die  
Be saddened most; and I thrive not in life  
So conquered is my strength, so battered by its strife.

3  
"Yet do not think it is the siege of Troy  
Or any task of arms or any fear  
Occasions me my present great annoy;  
Mid other cares that one doth least appear.  
'Tis other grief that would my life destroy—  
That makes me craven neath its wounds severe:  
But what it is, seek not to know, my friend;  
'Twere best I speak it not but hide it to the end."

4

In Pandaro an instant pity grew  
And earnest wish sad Troil's pain to know;  
Whence he at once appealed, "Let friendship true,  
As formerly 'twas wont, reveal thy woe  
To me, thy friend, lest further ill ensue,—  
Wherefore so fain to join the shades below?  
It cannot be thou hold it friendly act  
To hide from me, thy friend, the cause thou art so racked!

5

"Fain would I share with thee this grief and woe  
If I can bring no ease to thine annoy,  
Because friends must them ever willing show  
To share all things, their sorrows and their joy;  
That I have loved thee thou dost truly know,  
Methinks, in good and ill with fair employ,—  
Dost truly know I'd render any feat  
Thou might'st require of me or as a friend entreat."

6

The prince sighed deep before he answer made:  
"O Pandar mine, since nothing thee can please  
Except thou know what woe hath me dismayed,  
I'll yield and tell thee briefly my disease,—  
Not in the hope that through thy proffered aid  
I may somehow secure my spirit peace,—  
But feeling I must satisfy thy prayer,  
To which I know not how to make denial fair.

7

"Love,—gainst whom, if any try defence,  
Too soon he's caught and finds his efforts vain,—  
Flames now my heart with such all pleasant sense  
I have no pow'r thence to remove his reign  
Henceforth; and this now me so sore repents,  
As thou canst see, my hand I scarce restrain,  
And scarce have checked its thousandth trial  
And fervent wish somehow to end my life most vile.

## 8

“Let this suffice thee, sweet and worthy friend,  
To know then these my griefs, which hitherto  
I have revealed to none, and God forfend,  
If to my love thou’ldst hold thee loyal-true,  
That thou disclose my eager amorous end  
And fervent wish, lest added ill ensue!  
Thou knowst now what I will; go thou, I pray,  
And let me fight alone my anxious fears today.”

## 9

And Pandar answered: “Couldst thou hope to hide  
So long from me thy great love’s secret fire?  
From me, who would my wits have glad applied  
And found some means thy comfort to inspire  
And sense of peace?” But Troilo replied,  
“Comes aid from thee, whom ever love’s desire  
I see tormenting? O thou hapless wight,  
Who thinkst with thine own frailty to relieve my plight!”

## 10

Whereto Pandaro urged: “I know, my lord;  
’Tis sooth thou speakst, yet oftentimes ’twill fall  
Who doth to other’s counsel him accord  
From venom saves himself and other gall;  
And sure it is the blind can ill afford  
To take those paths which seeing men appall;  
And though no man may for himself prove wise,  
He can give others aid when others’ perils rise.

## 11

“I too have loved through much despairing hap,  
And still I love of my perversity;  
And must perforce keep me within the trap  
Because I have not loved in secrecy  
Like thee. And God my folly wills, mayhap!  
But that all-loyal love I’ve given thee,  
I bear thee still and will preserve so well  
No man shall ever know the secret thou shalt tell.

12

"Rest then in me, my friend, thy trust secure,  
And tell me all that causes this thy plight,—  
What makes thy life so noxious to endure.  
Fear not I shall assume the scorner's right  
To mock thy love, for men that feel most sure  
Within their wisdom would all deem it light  
To claim love can be wrested from the heart  
Ere long-besieging time hath willed it to depart.

13

"Leave then thine anguish, cease thy sighs,  
And, reasoning, alleviate thy grief;  
So make thy sufferings in fear arise  
And pass, their pain becoming yet more brief;  
They who feel love alike make best allies  
Whene'er a lover's seen, 'tis my belief;  
And I, as thou too knowst, against my will  
Do love, and nothing can allay or soothe my ill!—

14

"Perchance the lovely one that troubles thee  
I can e'en to thy pleasure somehow bend;  
More gladly thy will satisfied I'd see,—  
If so might be,—than mine own pleased, my friend.  
Wouldst thou perceive it so, declare to me  
Her name whose charms do so much pain portend.  
Up, youth! Lie not so prone! Think, thou canst speak  
With me as to thyself in trust both firm and meek."

15

Some time the anxious Troilo refrained,  
Breathed deep,—but could not check his bitter sighs,  
While shame his countenance with blushes stained,—  
Then answered: "Pandar, friend,—true friend and wise,—  
Of honest cause my will were best constrained—  
I should not speak my love before thy eyes,  
For she from whom I trace my grief so sore  
Is of thy kin"—And, shame-faced, he could say no more.

16

And thereat Troil on his bed supine  
Fell wild with weeping and there hid his face.  
To whom good Pandar cried: "O comrade mine,  
Should fear so easy over trust gain place  
Within thy breast? Cease, craven, to repine,  
Lest to thy weeping I my death should trace,—  
Should she thou lovest my own sister prove,  
Gladly with all my power I'd help thee win her love.

17

"Up then, my friend, and tell me who is she;  
Tell me at once that I may see straightway  
To thy sweet comfort, sweetest care for me.  
In mine own mansion doth this lady stay?  
Tell me I pray, whoever she may be  
(For I go pond'ring who should be the may),  
And I'll be certain scarce six days shall speed  
Ere I shall wrest thee from this grievous state and need."

18

To these pleas Troilo would answer naught  
And every moment closed his lips more tight,  
But, as his ears Pandaro's promise caught,  
Within himself he felt his hopes more bright;  
And now he yearned to speak, and now he fought  
His silence to maintain with all his might,  
Ashamed to loose his tongue,—but Pandar urged;  
At last he turned; and, weeping, forth his words now  
surged:

19

"My Pandar, I could wish that I were dead  
Rather than thinking of Love's wound in me;  
If by concealing it no pain were bred,  
No wrong to thee, I'd still act feigningly;  
But more I cannot; and, if thou art led  
Wisely as is thy wont, well canst thou see  
Love doth not wish that man should love by law  
Save that one law which man's own appetite doth draw.

20

“For lawless Love makes men sometimes desire  
 Their sisters, girls their brothers wickedly;  
 Makes daughters love their fathers, and with fire  
 For sons-in-law fills beldames sans degree,  
 Making poor wights despite themselves aspire,  
 For good or ill, to know Love’s ecstasy.  
 I love your cousin Criseis,” he said,  
 Mouthing his words, and wept and fell back on his bed.

21

When Pandar now had heard the lady’s name,  
 At first he laughed, then answered: “Troilo,  
 By Heaven I beg thee, friend, to change thy game  
 Of idly weeping, since Love hath loved thee so  
 Pointing tow’rd such a place thy amorous flame  
 It could not tow’rd a worthier lady blow.  
 The may, such beauteous grace is hers and rare,  
 In all her soul is worthy of thy love, I’d swear.

22

“No lover’s friend was ever worthier,  
 More affable or sweeter in converse;  
 No lady could more grateful pleasaunce stir;  
 And poet could not of a queen rehearse  
 Virtues more rare than those that dwell in her;  
 Yea, of a truth they would transcend all verse.  
 For she is peerless! ne’er a king could hold  
 His heart in check should she her love to him unfold!

23

“Besides these graces named, another one,  
 To thee of evil omen, doth my cousin vaunt,—  
 Lady more chaste than she there liveth none,  
 And all Love’s charms fall scorned beneath her taunt:  
 But gainst this virtue I’ll find words to run,—  
 If other mishap enter not to daunt  
 Our hopes,—and win thy need. Have patience now  
 And curb thy ardent love with every act and vow.

24

“Well canst thou see, therefore, that Love hath stirred  
Thy passion for one worth thy valiant name;  
Stand therefore steadfast, both in act and word;  
Expect, too, full success in thy new game,  
Which presently on thee will be conferred,  
Should not thy weeping its rare price disclaim;  
Worthy thou art of her and she of thee,  
And I will work the thing with ingenuity.

25

“Think not, my prince, I do not clear discern  
That such *amours* unseemly oft appear  
To worthy dames and may some evil turn  
On me or her or hers. And much I fear  
Lest rashness should us, justly, trouble earn,  
Or our fair scheme reach to the vulgar ear,  
And Criseis, reputed now sans stain,  
Bring scorn on her through Love, revilement and disdain.

26

“But since thy passion is forbidden sway  
And chance to act, and must, too, all unknown  
Remain to men, it seems to me the way  
That one may wisest take is Amor’s own,—  
No lover should his appetite allay  
Who keeps not all his acts to one shrewd tone,  
Lest any blush should come upon that dame  
Whose honour he would guard from every ill and shame.

27

“Methinks no woman lives who doth not will  
To live full amorously; ’tis only fear  
Lest shame befall that curbs and keeps her still;  
But if to cure this dread some means appear,  
Some honest medicine her wish to fill,  
Foolish is he who scorns her favours dear;  
My cousin, though a widow, craves no less  
The joy of love, whate’er denial would the truth suppress.



28

"Since then I feel thee prudent now and wise,  
 I ween I can please well the two of you,  
 Giving to each a joy that each will prize,  
 If but ye keep it from the public view .  
 As if it were not; some grievous fault would rise  
 As mine and chide me, should I fail to do  
 All in my power for thee. My friend, be shrewd,  
 Hide safe thy acts, meantime, from vulgar eyes and rude."

29

The words he heard made Troilo content  
 So mightily in mind it seemed indeed  
 He had already 'scaped his whole torment;  
 And thereat love flamed up again with speed,  
 Although he waited for a time attent,  
 As if his fere might have still further rede.  
 At last he spake: "O friend, thou speakest fair  
 In praising her, but my eyes find her still more rare.

30

"Then say how shall my inner fury 'bate?  
 My ardour high? (More high did no man see!)  
 The lady, when of my deep love's estate  
 She hath discerned,—alack it well may be,—  
 Will doubtful prove or yet, more obstinate  
 To my despair, scorn it for fear of thee,—  
 And even, moved her heart so, to seem chaste  
 To thee, she might not listen to thy words with haste.

31

"And further, Pandar mine, my wish is now  
 Thou shouldst not deem it ever my desire  
 The lady once to villainy should bow.  
 Her love I wish sought but with honour's fire,  
 Sans other means employed; and this I vow!  
 Gained so, in me 'twould sovereign grace inspire!  
 Seek this means then, and more I shall not pray":  
 The prince blushed deep and turned his shame-struck face  
 away.



32

To him then, laughing, Pandar quick replied:  
"In this thou sayst no folly can be traced.  
Let me but act; in me thy faith confide;  
For in my hands are rare pow'rs firmly placed,—  
Sermons to make love stir where'er they're tried,—  
And all my aims with gains are ever graced  
Whene'er new ends I seek! This task be mine,  
And in an ending sweet thy will shall be all thine!"

33

Thereat the prince leaped lightly from his bed,  
Kissed and embraced full ardently his friend,  
Swearing to win the war the Greek hosts led  
Was no such task to him as to contend  
Against that ardour which his passion fed:  
"O Pandaro, my heart I recommend  
To thy best aid, thou shrewd and prudent knight,  
Who canst bring end to sorrow—means to love's delight!"

34

Desirous then to serve the royal youth,  
Whom much he loved, this Pandar took his leave,  
Hoping some pleasure might afford him ruth,  
And sought out Criseis,—him to relieve,—  
Who, as she saw him come, arose in sooth  
And with fair greetings did her guest receive.  
First Pandar hath her fingers lightly caught  
And with her then a sheltered *loggia* sought.

35

And there with laughter, in parleying sweet,  
With merry words and all that gay converse  
Which kin are wont to use, and which most meet  
Those close in blood do knowingly rehearse,  
Pandaro played a while, with will to treat  
His cherished scheme as if 't were the reverse,  
Or of but trifling worth; then, sudden, gazed  
So fixed in Criseis' face she might well grow amazed.

36

And, as she caught, thus fixed, his gaze, she smiled,—  
 Then cried: "Hast never seen my face before?  
 What subtlety hath now thy mind beguiled?  
 To what intent?" And Pandaro but swore:  
 "Thou knowst I've viewed thy beauty from a child,  
 But never hath it charmed my vision more  
 Than now; and Heaven thou mayest praise and thank  
 No fairer dame than thou appears in any rank!"

37

Whereto the lady begged: "What praise is this?  
 Wherefore pronounce me fairer than of yore?"  
 To whom he quickly answered, full of bliss:  
 "Because thy face would make all men adore,  
 None being in the world so fair, ywis!  
 And now, unless I am deceived the more,  
 It doth a well-made knight so wholly please  
 He boasts his love for thee e'en though from Love he  
 flees!"

38

And Criseis thereon blushed so modestly,  
 Hearing the words her cousin Pandar spake,  
 She seemed a morning rose so fair was she;  
 Then from her lips such words as these did break:  
 "Make not thy mock of me, who joyous see  
 Whatever gifts to thee the kind gods make;  
 He must have little gear, this man I please;  
 Since birth, I have not charmed a wight with equal ease!"

39

"Let be thy words," our Pandar made reply,  
 "Declare if of his love thou art aware."  
 To whom she answered: "If I do not die,  
 No one man more than other hold I fair;  
 True 'tis from time to time I do espy  
 A passing knave who at my door will stare;  
 But whether he is looking there for me  
 Or of another dreams I know not certainly."

40

In answer Pandar queried, "Who is he?"  
And Criseis replied again, "In sooth  
I know him not, nor can I tell to thee  
More than I've told." And, inward, "Of a truth,"  
Pandaro reasoned, "The prince this cannot be;  
Some other woos!" Then, quick to serve the youth,  
He ventured more, "This man thou'st set in flame  
Is known of all—and one, too, that deserves his fame."

41

"Who can," then Criseis quoth, "take such delight  
In merely seeing me,—if I may ask?"  
Whereto this Pandar with evasion slight:  
"O damsel, since God wrought Creation's task,—  
Made the first man,—there breathed no truer wight  
Nor held more perfect soul in human mask  
Than he whom I shall name,—whose love is such  
One could not say a man had ever loved so much!"

42

"He is of spirit and of lineage proud,  
An honest man who holds his honour dear;  
With natural wit is no man more endowed,  
Nor lives in other science e'en his peer,  
Valour and zeal are in his face avowed;  
I cannot tell you all his virtue clear;  
O happy is thy beauty, which hath stirred  
A man, so made, to hold thee to all dames preferred!

43

"Well is the jewel suited to the ring  
If, as thou beauteous art, so provest thou wise;  
If thou become his fief in anything  
As he hath thine become, a star will rise  
In union with the sun; no luck could bring  
To fairer *damoiseau* in amorous ties  
A fairer *damoiselle*! Be thou but coy!  
Blessed art thou, if thou wilt consummate thy joy.

44

"One only opportunity appears  
To every one who lives that he may seize;  
And whoe'er lets it come and pass, in tears  
That man must grieve that it so rapid flees,  
Blaming himself; and now to thee it nears,  
Drawn by the might of thy fair face to please.  
Employ thou it,—while I, more luckless born,  
Weep that God, Fate, the World allowed me only scorn!"

45

"Are these true words, or wouldst thou tempt me ill?  
Or art thou from thy wits?" gasped Criseis dumb;  
"What man or knight should of me have his will  
Save he had first my married lord become?  
Yet say "What man is this,—an alien still  
Or citizen, on whom such pain hath come  
For love of me? Speak,—if thou oughtest, speak,  
And do not merely cry thy bootless sighs so meek."

46

And Pandar answered: "Citizen is he,  
Yet none of mean degree,—my greatest friend,  
From whose full breast, perhaps through Destiny,  
This secret I've disclosed, I late did rend;  
And now he lives in plaint and misery  
Such fire thy glorious face doth in him send.  
Know therefore now that he that loves thee so,—  
Desires thee so,—is no man less than Troilo!"

47

Some time Criseis stood in mute amaze  
Her eyes on Pandaro, until she grew  
Pale as a dawn's most gray and sunless rays,  
Wishing her tear-bright eyes were less in view.  
Afraid her tears should flow their several ways  
Or, unstemmed in their course, her cheeks endew:  
Then, gaining speech, she murmured in surprise  
With many a halting breath and many fearful sighs:

48

"I had believed, my cousin Pandaro,  
If e'er I had so far in folly run  
As redelessly to love Prince Troilo,  
Thou wouldst have whipped me as a shameless one,  
Thou wouldst have sworn I shamed my kindred so,  
Disgraced my parents with the deed I'd done:  
Now thou dost urge I follow Love's mad way;  
Could strangers urge me worsè rede than that, I pray?

49

"Troil, I know, is valorous and great,—  
So brave a queen should find in him content;  
But since my dear lord's death (unhappy fate!)  
Always my heart has vowed with true intent  
Never to love again; my widow's state  
Always must be of grief and deep lament;  
My only joy is memory of him—  
My only wish that memory may never dim:

50

"Yet were there living man my love might win,  
Surely that man should be thy Troilo  
Could I be sure he felt true joy therein,  
Once it was giv'n; but, Cousin, thou must know  
Such ecstasies as Troil now is in  
Do commonly befall, and even so  
Last but four days or six—for o'er the night  
Men's thoughts do change their love and men seek new  
delight.

51

"Let me continue such a life to lead  
As Fate hath thought it fair to offer me;  
And he will find some lady fair indeed  
Whom he may love at will; for modesty  
'Tis meet I save my honour for my need;  
And Pandaro, let not this answer be,  
For God's sweet sake, to thee a cause of grief;  
But seek thou other pleasures to yield thy prince relief!"

52

Within him Pandar felt his cousin's scorn  
The while the lady's speech he patient heard,  
Then rose as one who thought his cause forlorn,—  
As if to go, paused, turned, resumed his word,  
And cried: "Sweet coz, to thee in praise I've borne  
Such honour as with joy I'd see conferred  
On my own sister, daughter, even wife—  
If with such pleasant kindred God had blessed my life.

53

"And since I feel the prince is worth much more  
Than e'er thy love could be, and yesterday  
Because I saw him for it in a plight so sore,  
I am myself much grieved,—alack the day!  
Believe thou wilt not, nor his pain deplore:  
But yet I know thy hardness would give way  
If thou, like me, didst all his ardour know;  
Then wouldst thou, for my sake, take pity on his woe.

54

"Discreet as he or of a faith as great,  
I do not think in all the world is knight,—  
Nor loyal friend as he in any state,—  
And friend could not desire thee with more might!  
'Tis meet thou love him, cease thy foolish prate  
Of widow's weeds, and grant thy youth its right.  
Waste not thy time; remember how dull death  
Or age may catch thy charms away like idle breath."

55

"Alack," quoth Criseis, "thou speakest true;  
The years recede and youth's frail charms decay  
And, ere love's path in full celestial hue  
Hath bloomed, we pass in dusty death away;  
But let me still in thought this truth review  
And tell me if of love at this late day  
I yet may joy and solace have—and how—  
And why—thou learn'dst the love of Troilo but now?"

56

Full shrewd our Pandar smiled, then made reply:  
"All will I tell since thou desirest to know;  
Two days ago, when spears did quiet lie  
Because a truce was made, Prince Troilo  
Would find diversion in a wood nearby—  
So begged I with him to the place should go;  
And, straying there from me, he gan to sigh  
And, presently, I heard him sing of Love and cry.

57

"I stood apart but, hearing his complaint,  
Murmured full low, I moved near to attend;  
And well I can his words from memory paint;  
He grieved, and prayed Love should his torment end,  
Crying: 'O sov'reign Lord, my brow grows faint  
So sore my sighs and passion do me rend,—  
My heart is racked for her sweet beauty's sake;  
Her charms have caught me so their bonds can never  
break.

58

" 'Where her fair image, more than others fair,  
I carry sweet portrayed, thou makest stay  
And there dost see my conquered soul laid bare  
And pensive made by thine effulgent ray,  
Which holds it strait within and girt with care,  
Begging the while it find that peace some way  
Which only my fair mistress' lucent eyes  
Can ever grant to it, sweet Lord, in any wise.

59

" 'If then unwilling thou my death wouldst see,  
Make known my grief, pardee, to this fair dame;  
Beseech and win of her that joy for me,  
Which, only, to thy subject peace can name.  
Will not, my Lord, that I die instantly,  
Or let my anxious soul now cease to frame  
The cry it ever makes, all night and day,  
Such fear it hath because grief hath no power to slay.



60

“ ‘It cannot be, my Lord, thou’ldst hesitate  
To light thy flame beneath her widow’s weeds?  
No greater honour could thee celebrate;  
Enter her breast with that desire that breeds  
Such pain in mine, I pray thee, not too late;  
Feel that, O pious Lord, to do so thou must needs,  
So that, through thee, her sweet and languid sighs  
May bear some comfort to my heart’s sad yearning cries.’

61

“And these words murmured, Troil deeply sighed;  
First bowed his head to say I know not what,  
Then, growing silent, only wept and cried.—  
Through me, who saw, at once suspicion shot  
Whence flowed his tears; and I did then decide,  
Should ever time fit such a harmless plot,  
To laugh one day and ask what meant his song?  
And what occasioned him to keep that mien so long?

62

“But time to this did first to-day agree  
When, entering, I found the knight alone  
Within his room e’en as I thought ’twould be;  
There on his bed he lay like any stone,  
Though quick he turned toward, on seeing me,  
Lest I should aught suspect why he did groan;  
Yet, as I nearer drew again, he wept  
And grief through him once more its cruel passion swept.

63

“As best I could I sought to comfort him,  
And with new art and diverse tricks of speech  
I drew from him what was his trouble dim,  
Giving him, ere he’d speak, my pledge in each,  
That on my faith I’d tell no man his whim.  
Then pity moved me to come here and teach  
Thee of his love,—whom I have fully told  
Of that he begs thee much not from him to withhold.



64

"And thou! what wilt thou? Be so lofty-proud  
 And let him go who finds himself no cure  
 For loving thee, to Death, the fell-endowed?  
 Or cruel fate or mischance else endure?  
 For loving thee must he die unavowed?—  
 If thou to him with thy fair visage pure  
 And lucent eyes could be in aught less dear,  
 Then only couldst thou save him from the death now  
 near."

65

At length Criseis answered: "Unaware  
 His secret thou hast caught from out his breast,  
 The while he mused, though firm he held it there,  
 Until thou foundst him to his tears addressed,  
 Prone on his bed! May God now yield him fair!  
 Make me no less than him to feel I'm blest!  
 For, through thy speech, strange pity stirs in me,  
 Who am in naught so harsh as I may seem to be."

66

Some time she paused; then, sighing deep, pursued  
 Almost transfixed: "Alas, I see it well,  
 Where leads thy pious wish when closely viewed;  
 But that I grant it *devoir* doth compel—  
 And pleasing thee; and he is worthily endued.—  
 Suffice it thee I see him, and then tell  
 How I, if he be sage, may scape all shame,—  
 Escape e'en worse perhaps,—and seem in naught to  
 blame."

67

"Sweet sister mine," quick Pandar then replied,  
 "Thou sayest well; his shrewdness I'll demand  
 Though I am sure he hath no guile inside,—  
 So courteous he is, his heart so grand,—  
 Save some mischance hath newly changed its pride.  
 God save him aye from every lawless stand!  
 But I'll find thee such grace 'twill pleasure thee;  
 Dwell thou secure in God and to thy *devoir* see."

68

Pandaro went, and Criseis moved apart,  
 Pond'ring the news and every tiniest word  
 Brought by her cousin with his pleasant art,—  
 Then sought her room, where deep her fancies stirred;  
 How all was said she mused deep in her heart;  
 She reasoned joy like hers but rare occurred,  
 Talking within herself, and oft she sighed,  
 Picturing the prince in all his fame and pride:

69

“Young am I yet, noble and blithe and fair,  
 Widowed indeed, but rich and still admired,—  
 Nay even loved,—childless and free as air;  
 May I not then by love again be fired?  
 And though my honour should perchance declare,  
 ‘This must thou not’, I’ll act as one inspired,  
 Be shrewd, conceal my will, and none will know  
 My heart hath willed new love, sad pleasaunce and sweet  
 woe.

70

“My youth, as all youth, speeds it tow’rd decay,  
 And should I lose it then so wretchedly?  
 In all this world I cannot find to-day  
 Woman without a lover; nay more, I see  
 And know it well,—to love is all men’s way:  
 And shall I lose my time in nullity?  
 To act as other mortals is no sin,  
 And blame from any one my actions cannot win.

71

“What man will want me, grown to older age?  
 No one, forsooth! In late years to repent  
 Will add but more woes to a grievous stage,  
 And futile prove my hours in mourning spent;  
 Alack words then, ‘Why felt I not love’s rage?’  
 Wise it will be to act full provident.  
 Fair is this man who loves thee, gentle, wise,  
 Fresh as the charm that in a garden lily lies.

72

"For royal blood and valour too supreme,  
Pandar, thy cousin, praises Troilo?  
Why then to thee should it unworthy seem,  
To take him to thy heart and let him know?  
Why not accord him every love and dream?  
Dost not thou hear the pity of his woe?  
O what rare bliss thou mightest with him see,  
Couldst thou but love him now as he in sooth loves thee!

73

"Yet 'tis no time of marriage-ties for me;  
And were it so, one's freedom to maintain  
To use at will is wiser rule, I see;  
Always that love proves lover's richer gain  
Which grows from friendship's sweet felicity;  
And howe'er great one's beauty may remain,  
How sure are we 'twill not our husbands tire,  
Who have each-every day some fresh thing in desire?

74

"As furtive water gives a sweeter taste  
Than wine that's drunk too copiously, to one,  
So is love's joy, that hides long unembraced  
By any husband, the sweeter felt when won.  
'Tis meet then thou, sans proving thee less chaste,  
Receive this prince so sweet to look upon,  
Whom God hath yielded thee by sov'reign grace,  
And to his ardent love grant him a fairer place."

75

Some time she stood, then sudden turned about  
And softly cried, "O wretched one," within,  
"What wilt thou do? The evil life, no doubt,  
That moves with love in love's sweet languid sin  
Thou knowst and all its sighs,—a dreary rout,—  
And all the complaints and griefs that dwell therein?  
And to them all, so close-joined jealousy  
That worse than churlish death our living comes to be!

76

“And as for him who so doth love thee now  
He is a prince of loftiest birth and rank—  
Out of thy star—his wish to keep Love’s vow  
May burn away and, if it fadeth blank,  
Sorrow will be thy portion—thou wilt bow  
Broken beneath thy shame, with him to thank,  
Only for having scorned thee! O beware,  
Wisdom that follows scandal hath no value rare!

77

“And even if this love should long endure,  
How canst thou know it will remain concealed?  
Foolish it is to trust to Fortune’s lure;  
And whate’er profit human counsel yield,  
’Tis well to scan it close; of this be sure,—  
If this thy love be e’er to men revealed,  
Then is thy good fame lost eternally—  
Lost here in Troy which so much praised thy chastity.

78

“Then let such love henceforth for them remain,  
Whom it doth please.” Such were the words she said,  
And thereupon began her sighs again;  
From her chaste breast with all her hardihead  
She strove to drive Troilo’s face. (In vain!)  
Blame turned to praise and praise to blame instead,  
The while she weighed his charms in reverie  
Or raised within herself sweet doubts with subtlety.

79

Meantime blithe Pandar, leaving Criseis,  
Had straightway gone to Troilo, his friend  
(No whit he lingered so he felt in bliss),  
And, yet far off, he cried words to this end—  
“Comfort thee, brother, since for thee, ywis,  
I’ve gained all that to which thy wishes bend,—  
Or near to it”; and taking seat, he said,  
Without a pause, how everything he did had sped.

80

As flowers, bent and closed by chilly night,  
Open their eager faces in the morn  
When on their stalks the sun shines warm and white,  
So Troilo then his valour, late forlorn,  
Opened again, beholding Heaven's light,  
And recommenced again, like person noble born:  
"To Venus and her puissance be the praise,—  
And to her son,—of all the words my songs shall raise!"

81

Then Pandar he a thousand times embraced  
And kissed him just as oft, so glad was he  
That, if a thousand Troys had there been placed  
As gifts to him, he could not gladder be.  
Then slow with Pandar forth his steps he traced,  
Hoping he might Criseis' beauty see  
Or, gazing closely, might e'en too detect  
If Pandaro's late words in her had had effect.

82

And from her window lo the lady gazed!  
(Perhaps she trusted he might soon draw near!)  
And, as he looked, our Troil grew amazed,  
For nothing wild or stern did she appear  
But, with her right hand o'er her breast upraised,  
She chastely looked on him with mien sincere;—  
And thereupon the prince stole off in joy,  
Changing his praise to God, to Pandar, and to  
Venus' Boy.

83

And now all that dilemma fled away,  
The which held Criseis between two fires;  
Within, she praised his manners every way,  
His quiet acts,—his courteous desires;  
So suddenly Love seized her that sweet day  
That, henceforth, only him her heart requires;  
And much she grieves the precious time let go  
Ere all his perfect love to her she came to know.

84

Troilo sings and makes great holiday,  
And offers jousts and gifts most lavishly;  
Often he changes garb to seem more gay,  
And always yet he loves more fervidly;  
Is pleased to find it is no grievous way  
To follow Love, and her discreetly see  
When Criseis,—who was nothing less discreet,—  
Appeared at times in beauty fair and all complete.

85

But, as from ancient habit still we see  
Fire burns more brightly when we fuel add,  
It chanceth oft, as hope grows more to be,  
Love flames with newer power, keen but sad:  
So Troilo now felt more grievously,  
Than it was used, his high heart's wish grow mad  
And goad him forward; whence his woeful sighs,  
More sad and plaintive than before began to rise.

86

Henceforth the prince with Pandar often grieved,  
Crying, "Alack, fair Criseis hath ta'en  
My life from me, and all that it relieved,  
With her fair eyes; and so I'm bound in pain  
I must soon die, be not some help received,  
So mad, so hot—love burns my heart again.  
What shall I do? Must I abide content,  
Merely to know her grace and courteous intent?"

87

"She looks on me and suffers that I gaze  
In honour too on her; this ought to be  
Enough for my inflamed desires to praise;  
But my love's lust in its cupidity  
Yearns still for more; so unbound are those ways  
In which its ardour moves, that none could see,—  
Who had not felt the same,—or yet believe  
How that flame e'er torments and new force doth receive.

88

"What shall I then? I know not what to do,  
Except proclaim thou, Criseis, art fair  
Or cry that thou alone canst aid me true,  
Esteeméd lady, with thy virtues rare.  
Thou only canst my ceaseless fire subdue,  
Sweet light, sweet flame, my heart's sweet joy and care;  
Could I be with thee for one vernal night,  
A hundred nights in hell I'd pay for its delight.

89

"What shall I, Pandar? Wilt thou nothing say?  
Thou seest me in such furious fire consumed,  
Yet shapest thy face in that thy quiet way,  
As if for all the sighs to which I'm doomed  
Thou hadst no mind; aid me, my friend, I pray;  
Counsel me lest my pain be all resumed;  
For, comes no succour soon from her,  
I care not when death's nets may trip me sans my stir."

90

And Pandar answered: "Well indeed I see  
And hear thy say; but, true to aid thy pain,  
I ne'er yet thought I had ability,  
Nor never will; yet always am I fain  
To do, not only what befits for thee,  
But all things else, without thy force to train  
My will or thine entreaty. Let me view  
All open, then, the fiery wish thou seemest to rue.

91

"I know that in whate'er events befall  
Thou seest six times as much as I, my friend,  
Yet were I thou, I'd write to her of all,—  
Say with my hand what pain my heart did rend;  
And therein I should make my prayer a call,  
A plea, through God, she to my ardour bend  
With love and courteous thought of me;  
And what I wrote to her I'd send immediately.



92

"And furthermore, if thou wilt to her write,  
 I will beseech her that she pity thee  
 With all my power, and thou shalt see it right,  
 Whate'er she answers; faith is sure in me  
 That her reply will bring thee rare delight;  
 Write then, and let her in thy letter see  
 All whole thy faith, thy pain, and thy desire;  
 Nothing omit, but all thou spakest here express entire."

93

This answer more than pleased our Troilo,  
 But as a timid lover he replied:  
 "Alas, my Pandar, soon thou'lt see and know,  
 As others do, how nicely ladies pride  
 Themselves on seeming chaste; and, wrote I so  
 And didst thou her my letter bear, she'd chide  
 Thee first for shame, reject it then for scorn;  
 So that my state would be in misery more forlorn."

94

But Pandar, answering evasive, said:  
 "Do, prithee, what I say, and let me try;  
 And, should Love with her favour me bestead,  
 Certain I am to bring thee her reply,—  
 And in her own hand writ; refuse instead,  
 And thou mayst longer sad and fearful sigh;  
 Thou mayst repeat then all of thy torment  
 And I shall have no power to make thee more content."

95

And then the prince cried, yielding: "Have thy will,  
 I shall go now incontinent and write  
 Beseeching Amor he the way fulfill  
 With every boon and all my words endite."  
 And thereupon he rose in manner still  
 And sought his room, and, sagely as he might,  
 He wrote to Criseis, his lady dear,  
 His letter then at once,—whose words ye now shall hear.



96

“Lady, if man in sorest dolour found—  
Held by complaints and other hard estate  
As I for thy sake now am held and bound,  
Could fitly bid thee hail and happy fate,  
Then might I try; but e’er my words must sound  
Futile and hopeless,—words of poorest rate!  
Troilo cannot hail thee as is meet—  
Even though from only thee his life knows what is sweet!

97

“And yet I cannot flee great Amor now  
Who meaner men than me hath rendered bold,  
For Amor prompts these words that I avow  
And write, e’en as thou seest, and I must hold  
His laws all in esteem—to them must bow!  
Wherefore, if through me errour now is told,  
Blame Love for it and pardon grant to me,  
O my sweet esperance, I mutely beg of thee.

98

“Thy beauty high, the glory of thine eyes,  
The splendour of thy gentle customs born,  
Thy chastity,—of woman’s worth the prize,—  
The manners which thy every act adorn,  
Have made him Lord in such a subtle wise  
To me, and thee my mistress, though unsworn,  
That, saving death, no accident could part  
The bonds that keep thy image closed within my heart.

99

“Whate’er I do, the image fair of thee  
One only thought brings always to my heart  
And every other speech expels from me,  
Save speech of thee; for, though thou redeless art  
Of how my soul thy handmaid seeks to be—  
A handmaid whom thy virtue may impart  
Something of gentleness—my lips do speak  
Always thy name, crying ‘O heart, peace—do not break!’

100

“From these things, lady, springeth such a fire  
 As day and night my soul with torture weighs  
 And leaves no peace, where’er I may retire;  
 My eyes weep tears, my breast its sighs doth raise,  
 Little by little I feel myself expire  
 From that great fire that in me flames always;  
 ’Tis meet then that I flee to thy virtue,—  
 Only to it if peace I’d ever have ensue!

101

“Thou only canst my grievous pains allay,  
 Put me in peace whene’er it be thy will;  
 Thou only canst my sorrow do away,  
 Thou only with repose my heart canst fill;  
 Thou only canst my furious torment stay  
 With pious works of thine and make it still;  
 And only thou, my sweet, canst satisfy  
 The wish my heart will cherish evermore most high.

102

“Therefore, if ever any mortal wight  
 Through either faith kept pure or love kept great  
 Or service constant kept with all his might,—  
 In every case, in good or ill estate,—  
 Hath grace deserved, regard me in such light:  
 As one deserving, me enumerate,  
 Lady, who come to thee as unto her  
 Who all my lofty passions, all my sighs doth stir.

103

“Well do I know I have not merited,  
 Through any service, that for which I play;  
 Yet only thou for whom my heart hath bled,  
 (As for no woman else) canst show the way  
 To make me worthier in heart and head!  
 O sweet my heart’s desire, let go, I pray,  
 Thy high mind’s high disdain; be kind to me,  
 O thou whose every act bespeaks gentility.

104

"Certain I am that, as thou provest fair,  
Thou wilt prove piteous. And all my grief  
Will change soon into joy most blithe and rare,  
Once thou wilt, lady, yield me sweet relief,  
Ceasing to wish that I my pain should bear  
And die for love of thee, 'tis my belief.  
My prayer is then—if aught avails my prayer—  
By that high Love whose will keeps thee in  
precious care!

105

"At best I am a very meager prize,  
Of little puissance, and of worth still less,  
But, sans fail, I am thine whate'er arise.  
Be thou but shrewd; when I no more confess,  
Thou'lt know no more to speak within me lies;  
Yet still I hope thy acts may still me bless  
More than I earn and more than I deserve;  
May Love to this high deed thy gentle heart preserve!

106

"Full many things remain for me to say,  
But lest I weary thee, I'll keep them still;  
And to this end the fair lord Love I'll pray,  
That, as he placed thee in my pleasure's will,  
So in thy wishes he may find a way  
To place me too with thee, and thee so thrill  
That, as I now am thine, the time may be  
When thou becomest mine to be no more from me."

107

And after all these words the prince had writ,  
Upon one page, he folded it with care,  
Then bathed his seal (in strange and languorous fit)  
Upon his tear-strewn cheeks, to seal it there;  
Then, o'er a hundred times, still kissing it,  
He gave to Pandar's hands that letter rare,  
And did so, crying: "Letter, thou art blest,  
Destined in my fair lady's hand soon to be pressed!"

108

Pandaro then the pious letter took  
 And, parting, sought out Criseis' abode;  
 Who, as she saw him come, her guests forsook,  
 Meeting him ere he o'er her threshold strode;  
 And like an orient pearl then she did look,  
 Poised between wish and trembling in her mode.  
 Each greeted other while they were afar  
 And then they clasped their hands as who most  
     cordial are.

109

A moment's pause—then Criseis began;  
 "What business brings thee here? Is't tidings new?"  
 And to her Pandar's answer glibly ran:  
 "Lady, I have for thee good news and true,  
 But not for others' ears,—as, shouldst thou scan  
 These notes, they'll prove most quickly to thy view,  
 For he who wrote them soon will die of woe,  
 If thou'lt not soon on him some little love bestow!

110

"Take them, pursue them through with diligence;  
 And soon, I ween, reply will make him glad."  
 Criseis paused in timorous reticence,  
 Nor took them yet, the while to colour sad  
 Her face was changed, until with diffidence  
 She cried in plaintive note: "O Pandar mad,  
 Desist; if love puts thee in quiet truth,  
 Have some respect for me, not only for the youth.

111

"Thyself be judge, consider thou and see;  
 Ask thyself dost thou ask a seemly thing.  
 Can I do well to take immediately  
 Such letters as from Troil thou mayst bring?  
 Should e'er a woman through dishonesty  
 Think to cure pains that in her lover spring?  
 Leave not his letters here, I pray;  
 For God's love, Pandar, take them back—away! away!"

112

Pandaro, though disturbed, still urged his case:  
"This is a matter ever strange in thought,  
That what they most desire all dames abase,  
And toward it ever each one feels she ought,—  
Beyond her sex,—prove harsh in every place;  
So oft before this truth to thee I've brought  
Thou shouldst now be ashamed at hearing me;  
But still I do beseech thou'lt not deny my plea."

113

A while Criseis listened ere she smiled,  
And took and placed his letter in her breast;  
"When I have leisure," she then murmured mild,  
"Well as I can I'll scan what he's confessed;  
And, if for doing so I am reviled,  
The blame must be that I have been oppressed  
By thy ill power; may God the cause observe,  
And for my simple heart some honest way preserve!"

114

Pandar, the letter given, took his leave,  
And Criseis, to know what words it said  
Eagerly seized a time (one may believe)  
To leave her maids, and to her room she sped.  
There long she scanned the writing, sans reprieve,  
And deep in pleasure, read it and re-read  
Till she was ware so much Troilo burned  
It seemed in no act could his love be e'er returned.

115

Then dear became the thought to her, to know  
Love had so sudden pierced his heart and soul,  
Though that thought, too, was smit with living woe,  
So that she felt herself in nothing whole:  
And each word writ, when noted, moved her so  
She praised and thanked Love with an ample toll,  
Urging within, "This fire to quench some way  
'Tis meet for me to find the hour, place, and day.

116

"For, if I leave it in too great a flame  
Increasing, it may hap incontinent  
My face, discoloured to the point of blame,  
May show the hid desire within me pent,  
Which would be no small scar to my fair name;  
Myself to die I have no great intent  
Nor wish that others die, when, with such joy,  
I can avoid my own and Troilo's annoy.

117

" 'Tis sure I shall not tow'rd him be disposed  
Henceforth, as I have been until this hour;  
If Pandaro returns, he'll find composed  
My answer; I'll smile and give it to his power  
E'en if there be therewith high cost imposed.  
Nor shall they say I pine within my bower,  
Despised by Troilo; nay, his embrace  
Would I felt now, drawn to him even face to face!"

118

Pandaro, oft of Troilo desired,  
At length returned to Criseis the fair,  
And smiling asked, "Have aught thee yet inspired  
The words which from my friend I late did bear?"  
At once her face a crimson colour fired,  
And "God knows!" she could only then declare.  
Yet Pandar urged the more, "Hast thou replied?"  
Whereto "So soon?" she echoed 'tween her smiles  
and sighed.

119

"If e'er I shall be free to act for thee,"  
Pandaro pressed, "Grant that I be it now."  
And she to him, "My way I cannot see";  
While he coaxed still; "To please him think thou now,  
Is not Love wont to teach us well, pardee?  
I wish so much to comfort him, I vow,  
Thou couldst not e'er i' faith my wish conceive  
Without thou sent at once thy answer, I believe."

120

I'll do it then to pleasure thee," she cried,  
"And Heaven grant the matter may chance well!"  
"It will fare thus," Pandaro blithe replied,—  
"So far as pleasing him it doth excel,"  
And parted then; while Criseis moved aside,  
And in a corner where it so befell  
Her maids had little custom to resort  
She sat her down and wrote long words to this import:

121

"On thee, discreet and shrewdly potent friend,  
Whom love for me so flagrantly beguiles,—  
As now on one who to an undue end  
Is seized with love for her,—Criseis smiles,  
And doth, her honour saved, now recommend  
Her to thy valour which no sin defiles,  
Bidding thee, humbly, hail, to pleasure thee  
If but my name be safe—and eek my chastity!

122

"From him who loves thee so he hath no care  
For my pure honour—even for my fame—,  
I've had thy letter in thy writing fair;  
Reading wherein of thy life sad and lame,  
I sorrow as I read (by Heav'n I swear!  
And as my hopes of future bliss I frame!)  
And, though thy pages are all stained with tears,  
I have looked o'er them much—although  
with many fears.

123

"For pond'ring all things in my reason deep,—  
Thy sore affliction and thy mute request,—  
Seeing thy faith and how thy hope doth leap,  
I know not how I now may please thee best  
Or thy demand, and yet in safety keep,  
As I would e'er, what I have aye confessed,—  
That mundane thing that most doth satisfy,—  
My will to live full chaste and no less chaste to die!



124

“For me to pleasure thee were well enough  
If e’er the world were what the world should be;  
But, as it is, we may not use it rough  
But must observe its views obediently,  
Lest other deeds should bring us its rebuff  
And other ills; yet pity grows for thee  
And, malgree me, I’ll have to grant it place  
That thou may seem to gain more freely joy and grace.

125

“But such great worth I feel in thee resides  
I know that thou wilt fully comprehend  
What acts for me are meet, and that, besides,  
Thou’lt be content whatever I extend  
To thee in answer; what grief thee now bestrides  
Thou’lt curb,—thy grief that doth my heart offend,—  
Yet felt I not it was forbidden me,  
Most gladly I should do whate’er might pleasure thee.

126

“Slight is the art; as thou full well canst see,  
And mean the writing in this letter wrote,  
Which much I wish brought greater cheer to thee,  
But all it wills it cannot clear denote;  
Although good-will may give it potency  
Unless thou think it evilly doth quote.  
Yet may it to thy pain some respite bring,  
Even if it hath not made the fullest answering.

127

“For thine own offer here I make no place,  
For I am sure thou’lt keep all faithfully;  
And I forsooth, poor as I am and base,  
More than a thousand times do promise me  
To be thine own, if love doth not efface  
With flame my very soul, which certainly  
Thou wilt not wish; no more,—but God I pray  
He may content thy wish and mine some happy day!”



128

And, after she had writ him in such wise,  
She folded, sealed, and gave to Pandaro  
That letter sweet. He, not delaying, hies  
Away with it in search of Troilo,  
And gives him it with joy and great surprise;  
And, taking it, in haste that prince of woe  
Reads what was writ and gins to sigh anew,  
His heart aquiver as her words appear to view.

129

But, having well considered all she wrote,  
At last he mused: "If right I understand,  
Love binds her; but, as if of evil note,  
She seeks a shield to hide her from his hand,  
And shelter her from those great blows he smote;  
But that to do she cannot power command,  
For Venus makes me bear love and endure,  
And so must Criseis change to other talk for sure."

130

To Pandar, too, to whom the prince breathed all,  
The same seemed true; so, more than was his use,  
The youth takes comfort in his amorous thrall;  
For his chagrin no more he finds excuse,  
But hopes that presently the hour shall fall  
That will his pains reward with boons profuse;  
And this he begs and calls for day and night  
As that which can alone his suffering requite.

131

From day to day his ardour thence increased  
And, though hope helped him bravely to endure,  
In heart to feel most grave he never ceased;  
And that it grieved him much we can be sure,  
Or, from his fervour, we may deem at least  
He oft would dictate letters sweet and pure,  
To which her answers came now harsh, now mild—  
Frequent or rare, however thrifty Fortune smiled.

132

Wherefore of Amor oft he would complain  
 Or Fortune, too, whom e'er he deemed his foe,  
 And many times, "Alas!" he cried in pain;  
 "If Amor's nettle stung with less of woe  
 (Since it must pierce and grieve me thus again),  
 Then could my life, of solace beggared, go  
 And seek out soon that sweet and gracious port,  
 Where first I shall arrive when death is my resort."

133

Pandar, who felt how deep the amorous flame  
 Burned in the breast of his beloved friend,  
 With frequent courtesy to Criseis came  
 And frequent prayers, and told her to the end  
 All that she saw herself of Troil's fame;  
 Who yet, although she gladly ear would lend,  
 Opposed: "Do I not now already do  
 The things thou askedst, brother? Why, then,  
 more pursue?"

134

"They'll not suffice," Pandaro made reply;  
 "I wish thou comfort him with fairer speech."  
 And him Criseis answered with a sigh:  
 "Myself to do his will I ne'er can teach,  
 For that I should my virtue's crown lay by  
 I'll never wish—through any cause thou preach;  
 But like a brother, for his goodness rare,  
 I will him always love—and for his honour fair."

135

"This crown," Pandar replied, "the priests will praise  
 In them from whom they cannot rob it e'er;  
 All men like saints their brows and speech may raise,  
 But, when the world's asleep, they little care.  
 No one shall ever know Prince Troil's ways;—  
 Relieve his pain,—to do him well but dare.  
 They do great ill who can, but do no good,—  
 And they all waste their time who live in scornful mood."

136

And Criseis said: "I know his virtue well,  
That tender for my honour it will be,  
Nor will he ask,—if right his worth I spell,—  
Other than due and honest things of me;  
And thee I, by my safety, swear and tell,  
That I am his, for whom thou askst this fee,  
More now a thousand times than I am mine,  
So sweet I find his courtesies—so true and fine."

137

"If sweet they seem, what more then shouldst thou seek,  
I pray thee let all this thy shyness go.  
Wouldst thou he died for loving thee so meek?  
Dear thou must hold thy beauty, valued so  
Thou slayest such a man for it! But speak,  
When wouldst thou that he come? Thou whom, I know,  
He prizes more than Heaven or God? How? Where?  
Think not to use with him thine every test and care!"

138

"O wretched me! Where wilt thou lead me now,  
My Pandaro, and what more have me do?  
Thou hast despised and broke my chastest vow;  
To look thee in thy face I soon must rue;  
O wretched me! 'twill never mend, I trow;  
And in my heart the blood will freeze anew,  
The while I think of that he asks of me,—  
And thee it nothing grieves,—as thou dost clearly see!

139

"Would I had died upon that idle day,  
When in this *loggia* first I harked to thee,  
Thou madest my heart to yearn in such a way  
I doubt if e'er again it may be free;  
Rather my honour thou'lt to loss betray  
And me, alack, to sighing endlessly!  
I can no more appeal, and thee to please  
I will incline to do whate'er shall give thee ease."

140

"But (if before thy presence prayer may rise),  
I pray thee, gentle, precious kinsman mine,  
Our acts and words be hid from all men's eyes  
And secret kept; for sure the power is thine  
To see what might ensue if, to surprise,  
Such deeds should come to light; give him this sign—  
Bid him be sage—and, when the time draws nigh,  
I'll do whatever will his pleasure satisfy."

141

And Pandar answer made, "Thy lips guard well;  
Nor he nor I shall ever thee betray."  
And she: "So mute thou hast me in thy spell  
Thou canst perceive what fear doth me affray—  
Of what I hardly know; yet thee I tell  
My honour and my shame no less to-day  
Touch thee than me; I'll pass from them in peace,  
And thou canst do with them whatever thee may please!"

142

And Pandar then: "Have thou no idle fear  
Lest we in this shall not good caution use,  
When wilt thou let the prince talk with thee here?  
Now let us draw the threads 'twere best we choose;—  
To do it soon doth better far appear  
Since 't must be done, for sure our little ruse  
Is better hid, once ye in love have met  
And both together planned what acts await you yet."

143

"Thou knowst," said Criseis, "what ladies dwell  
And other servants in my house with me,  
A part of whom must go ere long, they tell,  
T' attend the fête; then with him I will be.  
May this delay in him no grief compel!  
How he shall come, I'll show betimes to thee;  
Urge him to act in all things more than shrewd  
And keep his hardihood well hidden and subdued."

---

## CANTO THREE

---

I  
O SWEET and fervent Light, whose subtle ray  
Up to this point through fair Love's beauteous hall  
Hath guided, as I craved, my poem's way,  
It now befits thy doubled beam I call  
To guide my genius and so give it sway  
That in my verse may be declaréd all,  
No parcel missed, the good of Love's sweet reign,  
Which hath made Troilo a worthy man again.

2  
For every man can to this reign draw nigh  
Who will Love's passion all entire endure  
With knowledge, truth, and other virtues high;  
But to arrive no other way is sure,  
Whoe'er attempt. Therefore, I pray, be by,  
O Lady fair, my wishes high and pure;  
Fill with thy grace whatever I demand,  
And bravely I will sing thy praise on every hand.

3  
To Troil, though his ardour still burned keen,  
It seemed his fortune showed itself more fair;  
He only knew Criseis, pleased, had seen  
And answered with a sweet and lowly air  
What letters he had written her, I ween;  
And often as he saw that lady rare,  
She looked on him with face so soft and bright  
He knew he felt in him the most supreme delight.

4

Pandar had gone, as elsewhere I have told,  
Leaving the prince's lady to her peace,  
And, glad at heart and of his face quite bold,  
He sought the youth he'd left so ill at ease  
Between fair hope and sad complaints manifold,  
When he had gone fair Criseis t' appease;  
And, seeking for a time now here now there,  
He found him in a temple thinking and in prayer.

5

Soon as he came upon him thus in thought,  
He drew him thence apart and gan to say:  
"My friend, so deep with pain my heart was fraught,  
What time I saw thee languishing away  
So cruelly for love, on me was brought  
No small part of thy sorrow that sad day;  
To seek thee comfort I have never ceased,  
Since then; e'en though I have not found thy woe  
decreased.

6

"For thee I have become a go-between,  
For thee mine honour clear I've cast away,  
For thee my sister's breast, that late was clean,  
I've made corrupt till in her heart doth play,  
Deep placed, a love for thee; and her, I ween,  
Ere time grows long thou'lt see as fair as day—  
With greater pleasaunce than thou hear'st me speak  
Thou'lt have thy Criseis in thy arms, full meek.

7

"But, as God knows, who all things yet doth see,  
And thou thyself, it was a hope full poor  
First sped my efforts and my loyalty,  
Alone, to thee my friend,—made them endure  
Till by my toil the prize I'd won for thee;  
So now, if of thy wished boon thou'ldst make sure  
Nor have base Fortune catch it quick away,  
In all thy love schemes show thee wise, my prince,  
I pray.

## 8

"Thou knowst through Troy town Criseis' repute  
Is yet most fair and sacred; not a deed  
Of else than good do men to her impute;  
And, now thou hast her in thy hands, take heed,—  
For thou canst take whatever thee may suit,  
Yet if her name she lose, 'twere evil speed,  
And more than shame to me, her kith and kin,  
Who evermore should guard lest villain's name I win.

## 9

"Therefore I pray thee now as I can best  
That 'tween ourselves we keep this business still;  
From Criseis' heart I have, with happy hest,  
Removed all modest fear and every will  
That checked at thee, and hold it now so stressed  
With speaking of thy true love's fill  
That quite she loves thee and inclines to do  
Whatever it may please thee to command her to.

## 10

"Yet but a little time, before success  
Thou shalt enjoy complete, and I shall place  
Her in thine arms for thy delight to bless!  
But, 'fore God, act with such a quiet grace  
That naught escapes thy heart through carelessness;  
O dear my friend, despise not my dull face  
If many times I make my prayer to thee,  
Seeing that what I beg is begged in honesty."

## 11

O who could tell in verse the joy complete  
Which Troil's soul, now hearing Pandar, knew?  
Or how, receding far, its pain did fleet,  
The more he spake, away from every view?  
The sighs that he had breathed to riches sweet  
Yielded their place most gently; caitiff rue  
Departed; and his lately tearful face  
Bright new hope did reveal with signs of joyous grace.



## 12

And, as it chances in the new born spring  
That trees and shrubs in leaves and blossoms new  
Smile at the robes the sudden hours bring  
To hide their limbs late nude to wintry view;  
As meadows, hills, and eke the rivers too  
Smile, clothed in green and every flower's hue;  
So with a newer joy 'twas easy seen  
Troilo smiled and laughed now with a face serene.

## 13

And softly in sweet rapture first he sighed,  
Gazing in glad content at Pandar's face:  
"Ah, how thou must remember," then he cried,  
"The tears thou foundst me in—my bitter case,  
When still methought it best my love to hide!  
Ah, how thou must recall that time and place  
Where thy demands and urgent wish to know  
Forced from my woeful breast the reason of my woe!

## 14

"Aware, then, how I tried to keep it hid  
Even from thee, my only friend, although  
To tell it thee no peril did forbid—  
Save that I seemed immodest doing so;  
Think how, when I consent,—as late I did,—  
To tell't—think how I dread lest others know!  
Forget not how I fear lest men suspect;  
God keep that misadventure from poor me deject!

## 15

"But natheless, by highest Jove I swear,  
The God who heaven and earth rules equally,  
That if in Agamemnon's hands to fare  
Prove not my evil chance, I swear it thee,  
That were my life not mortal but more rare,—  
Eternal e'en,—thou canst assuréd be  
Thy trust with all my power will be preserved,  
And she who wounds my heart full honestly be served.



16

"Full well I wot all thou hast said and done,  
And all thy grace to me I see it clear;  
And that no act of mine, howe'er begun  
Or rendered, could repay thee mine arrear,  
For out of Hell,—and worse,—to Heaven I'm won  
And drawn by thee; so, by our friendship near,  
I beg, take not the villain's name to thee  
But rather think thou servest friend's necessity.

17

"The name of villain let those wretches claim  
Whom love of gold doth spur to villainy;  
What thou hast done thou didst, sans any blame,  
To draw me from my bitter complaints, I see;  
And from those hostile thoughts that ever came  
To fight and scatter all sweet peace in me—  
Just as 'tis meet that for a friend one do  
When one beholds his fellow overcome with rue.

18

"And, that thou mayest fully realize  
The gracious thanks I'd like to yield thee now,  
Know that I have a sister, beauty's prize,  
Polyxena, whose charms are praised, I vow,  
Scarce less than those of Helen in a wise;  
Open thy heart, seek love of her somehow—  
Or e'en of Helen, my own brother's wife—  
And, thee to win thy choice, I'll work with all my life.

19

"But, since thou hast achieved me so much more  
Than I could beg of thee, see to the end  
My sweet desire, when time fits, I implore;  
To thee I have recourse; all can depend  
Only on thee; in thee my joys, and more—  
My comfort, solace, health, delight—do blend;—  
Yet, an thou bid it not, I'll do no deed;—  
Be my delight, and thence thou'lt see thy joy proceed."

20

Pandar by Troil's word was satisfied,  
And both resumed their ordinary care;  
But in each day now Troilo espied  
A hundred days (with her so ill aware)  
And, suffering in them all, could scarce abide  
Those flames of love which all in him did tear;  
So gave to thoughts of love the hours of night  
And with his comrades spent the day in martial fight.

21

With matters thus, the time so much desired  
Of those two lovers neared; whence Criseis made  
To summon Pandar and it so transpired  
She showed him all her wish; but Pandar played,  
Grieving that Troilo that day was hired  
With others for some special martial raid  
Or deed of war—was far away from cry,  
“Although 'twas very like he'd come back by and by.”

22

This news, the while she heard, proved grief to her,  
And sad she turned; but with most friendly zeal  
Pandar declared he'd find some messenger  
To send the prince (she need make no appeal),  
And, thereupon, with but the briefest stir  
Nor any let, the man had proved him leal  
And Troil found,—who listened with surprise,  
Then hurried back to Troy in blithe and joyous wise.

23

And, come to Pandaro, from him he learned  
In full the needful steps that he must take;  
And now impatiently the young prince burned,  
Awaiting night that ever seemed to break  
In flight before his gaze; quiet he turned  
And took his way with Pandaro, his make,  
For that sweet spot where lovely Criseis stood  
Lonely expectant, with fear and subtle dread subdued.

24

At length the night fell clouded and obscure,  
As Troil wished, who, gazing full intent,  
Examined all to be the more secure,  
The while he moved, in hope that no event  
Should make his eager love new pain endure  
Or cheat it now when from its great torment  
It seemed it should escape; and soon,—alone—  
Secret—he entered Criseis' house, now quiet grown;

25

And in a secret, safe-removed place,  
As had been him instructed, stayed in wait;  
Nor seemed his waiting now an evil grace,  
Nor failing yet to see clear,—harsh in fate;  
But often with a sure, courageous face  
He urged within; "My love, ere very late,  
Will come to me, and I'll be happier then  
Than were I, all alone, the Lord of Earth and Men."

26

Criseis, who his coming well had heard,  
That he might now the better understand  
How 'twas arranged, coughed once and no more stirred;  
Then, lest his waiting wearily expand,  
She gan to speak, with oft a quickened word,  
Till all her maids she'd hastened (well she planned)  
Off to their beds, declaring that such sleep  
Had never fallen on her,—awake she could not keep!

27

After that each and all had gone to rest  
And the whole house grown quiet everywhere,  
To Lady Criseis it did first seem best  
Toward Troil's hiding place in haste to fare;  
Who, as he heard her footsteps thither pressed,  
Rose up and, starting tow'rd her, passed from there  
With joyful face—and mute expectancy  
To be prepared for all the lady might decree.

28

And now, a lighted torch within her hand,  
The lady quite alone came down the stair  
And found the prince, with all his ardour fanned,  
Awaiting her; whom, with full courteous air,  
She greeted as she could: "My lord, command  
If aught I did offend thee, hidden there,  
And thy high royal love in any way;  
Or, sweet my love, for God's sake grant me pardon,  
pray."

29

And her her Troil answered; "Lady bright,  
Sole hope and good and blessing of my heart,  
Thy face hath so long been before my sight  
A lucent star, so splendid in each part  
And each dear ray of it such glorious light,  
That all my palace seems of poorer art;  
And to ask pardon more is mine than thine."  
Then he embraced her and they kissed in rapture fine.

30

And now, ere they could part from that charmed place,  
With dalliance sweet and eager-joyous play  
They clasped their arms in many a glad embrace;  
A thousand times they kissed in amorous way,  
For in them fire burned of an equal pace,  
And each the other felt was dear as day;  
But, when their greetings ended at the last,  
They climbed the stairs and to an inner chamber passed.

31

Long would it need to tell now of their bliss  
And no man could express that rich delight  
They had together when they entered this,  
Free for sweet nuptials and sans hindrance quite  
Save that at Troil's side fair Criseis  
Trembled a moment and must cry in fright,  
"O Troil, lord and love, when brides are new  
They are abashed to meet, the first night, lovers' view."

32

To whom the prince then: "Sweet, O sweet my soul,  
Yield that my arms do now thee closelier take  
And have, as Lord Love wills, more perfect toll  
Of love." And she: "Behold, for thy sweet sake,  
I rid me of all fear and seek my goal  
In thine arms only." Then courteously her make  
Drew her more close and close in his embrace  
That they might win of Love more high and richer grace.

33

O sweet, most sweet and most desired night,  
How lavish wert thou to those lovers gay,  
If all the knowledge were made mine of right  
Which all the poets owned, I could not say  
Nor truly yet explain their joyaunce bright;  
But he who knows the favour of Love's way  
And boons hath had of him, can guess or know  
In part at least the joy that Love to these did show.

34

And all night long from one another's arms  
They stirred not, nor released their sweet embrace;  
Yet still believed, in one another's arms,  
It could not quite be real, their sweet embrace,—  
They could not be in one another's arms,—  
But only dreamed they were in sweet embrace;  
And each the other asked with frequent care,  
"Is mine a true embrace? or dream? or art thou there?"

35

And so they gazed with such enraptured will  
That neither could from other turn his eyes,  
But each the other cried with voice athrill,  
"My love, is't true I'm with thee in this wise?";  
And "Yes, heart of my heart," each answered still,  
"And God have thanks for it," in amorous sighs;  
And then each drew the other in embrace  
And sweetly kissed again the other's lovely face.

36

And oft upon her eyes, for love aglow,  
Troil would press a soft, enraptured kiss,  
Crying, "My heart ye have enflamed so  
With Love's sweet darts that burning now seems bliss,—  
And, caught, I cannot hide nor find it woe,  
Nor flee, as those are wont who fare amiss;  
Ye hold, and e'er may hold, mine eyes and me  
Meshed in the net of Love's own sweet intricacy.

37

A second time he kissed them, and once more,  
Till in response the lady kissed his eyes;  
Then he o'er all her face and breast did kisses pour;  
And no hour passed without a thousand sighs,—  
Not those that come from souls with anguish sore,—  
But out of reverent souls, which prove them wise,  
Showing thereby the love that's in the breast;  
Then, sighing o'er, themselves to joy they new addressed.

38

Such scenes should make the caitiff misers pause,  
Who so themselves have given all to gold,  
A-counting pence, they reckon love but cause  
For scorn and laughter—and him who loves, too bold;  
Let them but ponder if by any laws  
They can from all their wealth such pleasure hold—  
In any single point—as Love doth give  
To those who joined for his grand venture love and live.

39

'Tis like they'll say they can and, willing, lie,—  
Calling with many a wanton mock and jest  
"Love is a wretched folly best passed by,"  
Without once seeing that, by Fate's behest,  
A single hour may come their souls to try  
And they, their gold lost, live thence never blest  
By joy in life or love. God make them sad,—  
And give to lovers all the wealth they might have had!

40

But these two lovers, feeling comforted,  
Began together hopefully to speak,  
Telling each other of their pains now fled,—  
Their plaints, their sighs, their anguish cruel—bleak!  
And oft, when such speech had been wholly said,  
Again they would more fervent kisses seek;  
And now, forgetting all their past annoy,  
They took together thus a most delirious joy.

41

So here I have no tale to tell of sleep,  
For theirs was all desire the night should last;  
Such pleasure did they from their waking reap  
They could not sate each other while it passed;  
And all they did and said they thought to keep,  
Through such an act of waking, long and fast  
And not to let their fair chance lapse in vain  
They made full use of it all night in glad refrain.

42

But, as the cocks gan crow and day drew nigh  
And in the east the purple dawn arose,  
Their will t' embrace again once more burned high;  
And in that hour they felt were dolorous woes,  
Which made them part, and in it pain did lie  
Of such a kind none yet had known its throes,  
To torture them, so hard 't would be to part  
While Love flamed more than ever in each eager heart.

43

And, hearing them thus all too early crow,  
Fair Criseis called out sad: "O love of mine,  
Now 'tis ordained we rise by Fate, our foe,  
Would we keep hidden well our love's design;  
But yet I wish once more, before thou go,  
To kiss thy lips—to say that I am thine  
With one more kiss—that, after thou art sped,  
My pain, O sweet my life, may feel diminishéd."



44

Prince Troilo embraced her weeping thus,  
And, drawn within his arms, her kissed again,  
Cursing the day which came so envious  
And, churlish, made them part so early then;  
And after, he began in words as dolorous;  
“Lady, unmeasured grief comes oft to men,  
But parting from thee brings e’en greater woe,  
Since every joy I feel—that joy to thee I owe.

45

“I know not how I can do else than stay  
For thought of how much going thwarts my will,  
And that, now I have ta’en life’s pain away,  
Pale death o’er me its power holdeth still;  
Nor if I may return nor when I may;  
O Fate, why hast thou such a pleased thrill  
In taking me from there where most I joy?  
Why wilt thou now my solace and my peace destroy?

46

“Alack, what shall I do? If now desire,  
When first we part, constrains me to return  
Till life can hardly bear ’t? O pain most dire!  
And why, O hateful day, dost thou so yearn  
And come so soon our parting to require?  
How soon will’t be that once again I learn  
Thou art restored? Alack, I cannot know.”  
Then, turning back, he kissed fair Criseis’ face in woe,

47

Saying: “O lady mine, if I believed  
That in thy heart my image were to stay  
So sure as thine will rest in mine received,  
More dear ’twould be to give Troy’s rule away  
Than lose thy love, and less I should feel grieved  
At parting thus,—which gainst my will doth sway,—  
And hope that time and place might come again  
For us to soothe, as now, our cruel fire and pain.”



48

And, sighing, him fair Criseis answered then  
 While closelier she her arms about him cast:  
 "Have done thy talk, my soul, for oft mid men  
 I've heard it said (if well my memory last!)  
 Love's greedy spirit doth ne'er release again  
 What once 't has caught, but holds it hard and fast,  
 And pressed and closed in its embrace so tight  
 That counsel to release 't hath then no power or might.

49

"And through thee Love hath grown so whole in me,  
 O dear my precious lord, that if I sought  
 Loveless, as I was late, again to be,  
 I could not even wrest thee from my thought;  
 Morning and evening, always, shall I see  
 Thy image in my heart entirely wrought;  
 And, could I think myself so wholly thine,  
 I should more blessed feel than knowledge can define.

50

"Then live thou, therefore, of my love secure,  
 Which ne'er for other have I felt so great;  
 If to return thou wish with fervour pure,  
 I too desire it more than thou canst state;  
 And happy hour will not be mine, I'm sure,  
 Ere thou return, return thou soon or late;  
 Heart of my body, I commend me thee."  
 She spake and sighed, and kissed her prince  
 most tenderly.

51

And Troil, all against his will, arose  
 When now the hundredth time he'd kissed her face;  
 For then, like one who well his *devoir* knows,  
 He fought not Fate but clad himself with grace,  
 And then a thousand pledges did propose:  
 "I'll do thy will nor break it in no case;  
 Thy promise keep. I yield thee to God's care—  
 And mine own spirit, lady, to thy keeping rare!"

52

But Criseis had no voice to answer more  
So fast pain for his parting her had caught;  
And Troil with swift step, as ne'er before,  
Turned toward his house, now happy in his thought,  
Knowing in Love was even greater store  
To kindle love than e'er his will had sought—  
So much more he had found in Criseis  
Than he erewhile had dreamed could ever be in bliss.

53

And, to his royal palace now returned,  
The prince betook him quietly to bed,  
To seek somehow the sleep he late had spurned;  
But sleep refused to enter heart or head  
So restless in him now his new thoughts burned,  
Recalling his delight so lately sped,  
Thinking how great was his fair Criseis' worth,  
So all incredible it hardly seemed of earth.

54

And now her every act in reverie  
He turned,—and all her sweet, wise speech,—  
Repeating to himself still happily  
The pleasaunce that her every word did teach;  
And love of her he even felt would be  
Greater than he could image or beseech;  
But with such thoughts the more he was consumed  
The less he knew Love's flame was in his heart illumed.

55

And Criseis at her home did quite the same,  
Reasoning of Troil in her woman's heart,  
Speaking great praises of fair Amor's name  
That such a lover, proved in every part,  
He'd given her; and then she gan to blame  
The thousand years, it seemed, that must depart  
Ere she that lover once more could embrace,  
And, as the night before, could kiss him face to face.

56

Then, ere the morn was sped, came Pandaro  
To Troil ris'n, accosting him with glee,  
And fair was greeted by Prince Troilo,  
Who cast him on his neck quite joyfully:  
"My Pandar, none is welcome whom I know  
As thou"; and, on his brow in amity,  
He kissed his friend, "Thou'st won me heav'n for hell,  
And, if I be not slain now, all will be most well.

57

"And I could never do as much for thee;  
Were I to die a thousand times a day,  
It would not even then an atom be  
Of that I know is owed thee every way;  
From bitter plaint thou'st brought me joy to-day."  
Once more he kissed him, and then added he:  
"O sweet my love, who makest me content,  
When shall I hold thee more as Amor hath it meant?

58

"The sun, which all the world each day doth view,  
Sees ne'er a lady blithe or fair as she—  
If to my words now any faith is due—  
As sweetly clad or souled as graciously,  
And service to her none could ever rue;  
Or, in her hire, live else than joyously;  
O praised be Love, who now hath made her mine,—  
And thy good service, Pandar, friend so true and fine.

59

"For thou no little grace hast shown to me  
And given me to no slight joyousness;  
My life must ever be in debt to thee  
And thou mayst claim it always in redress;  
From death to life thou hast delivered me."  
He ceased and gladly mused in quietness,  
While Pandar, who had heard, stood waiting still  
And then to his words answered with a joyful will:

60

"If I in any slightest thing, my friend,  
Have pleased thee well, I am enough content;  
It proves on me sweet favours do attend;  
But yet, that thou now curb thy love's intent  
And guide it well, I must thee warning lend;  
Be thou most sage lest cruel, harsh torment  
Do wrest thy love away—and all thy joy—  
Or, for thy prating, turn't into a sad annoy.

61

"I'll gladly do whatever may thee please,"  
Troilo to his friend made fair reply;  
And then recounted at his greater ease  
What late had happened him of pleasures high,  
Continuing, "I say, to Love's decrees  
Hath never bowed a man so much as I;  
His ancient fire burns me in every place  
Drawn from fair Criseis' peerless eyes and face.

62

"I burn now more than e'er, but yet this flame,  
Which thus I feel anew, hath quality  
Other than that of yore; and jocund game  
It doth renew in all the heart of me  
For thought of Criseis' charms and beauteous name;  
And true it is that now more eagerly  
Than I was wont, I yearn for her embrace;  
I'd kiss a thousand times her sweet and lovely face!"

63

Nor could the youth now feel him satisfied,  
But prattled on to Pandar of the good  
He late had known and all his joy beside,  
Of comfort sweet that had all pain withstood,  
Of perfect love, that now no scorn belied,  
Which he for Criseis felt and ever would;—  
In whom was all his hope, he glad announced—  
For whom all other wishes he had late renounced.

64

Some time elapsed; then Fortune, proving fair,  
For Troil's love, gave opportunity;  
And straight, as soon as night was in the air,  
He slipped forth from his palace hastily,  
Glad no star showed itself in radiance there,  
And on the wonted way sped quietly  
To his sweet love; and in her house he strode  
To his accustomed place and quiet there abode.

65

And Criseis, as the other time she came,  
So this time to her love she came again,  
And in her manner did all things the same;  
And glad they bade each other greeting then,  
As lovers should, if they would have no blame,  
And after, hand in hand, with joy amain  
They got them to fair Criseis' chamber sweet,  
And there at once reclined for kissing as was meet.

66

And when she held him there in her embrace,  
Full blithe and joyous gan she then to speak:  
"Knows or knew ever any dame such grace  
As I enjoy? or could such favour seek?  
What woman would refuse with quiet face  
To die at her own hands with spirit meek  
If she might gain thereby a joy like mine—  
Know for one single moment a rapture so divine?"

67

"Ah, sweet my love!" went Criseis on to say,  
"I do not know how I shall ever tell  
The joy and glad desire made mine to-day  
For that I have thee in my heart so well;  
Where I shall always wish to have thee stay  
As true as late thy image there did dwell;  
And of Jove nothing else I would require  
Than that thou always have within a like desire.

68

"That Jove himself could ever check this flame,  
 I cannot think, although I did believe,  
 When last we met, he might attempt that game;  
 But evil was the guess I did conceive;  
 For thou pourest fevered water on the same,  
 So that it burns still more, thou canst perceive;  
 Whence now I love as ne'er I loved before,  
 And day and night I do desire thee more and more."

69

And Troil answered not far otherwise,  
 As still the two in sweet embraces clung  
 And prattled there thus in their lovers' guise,  
 Choosing such words as on their lips are hung  
 Who best know what delight within them lies,  
 The while he kissed the eyes he late had sung,—  
 Her lips and throat; and each did other greet  
 In words which, written out, prove them not half so sweet.

70

But then once more the envious day drew near,  
 As might through many an open sign be seen;  
 And him as cruel they cursed,—for 'twas most clear,  
 Far earlier than his use had ever been,  
 He chose, they vowed, on that morn to appear,  
 Aggrieved he should himself now so demean,—  
 But, when their curses proved quite powerless,  
 Both got them up in haste, since there was no redress.

71

Then each the other bade a fond farewell,  
 As they were wont, and, after many sighs,  
 They vowed that, ere the glass should many hours tell,  
 Each should once more look in the other's eyes,  
 And, as they could, in other's arms dispel  
 The tortures which in parted lovers rise,  
 And practice all Love's gifts to joyous youth  
 While they continued in such safety—in good sooth.

72

And Troilo now lived in mighty bliss,  
Singing his lady's charms as in a dream;  
Feeling he should himself prove all remiss,  
Should he another lady's face esteem;  
And that all other men lived but amiss  
Who loved not such a one, it him did seem;  
So matchless did his lady now appear—  
Such fair fortune the thought of her drew near!

73

And often he would seize Pandaro's hand,  
And oft his fellow to some garden lead,  
Where deep absorbed in thought of her he'd stand  
Or praise his lady's worth and courteous rede;  
Till joy, it seemed, did so his soul command  
It must disown all melancholic breed,  
And he would sing such songs in joyous wise  
As scarce a poet could by any means devise.

74

"O Light Eterne, whose glad and splendid rays  
Make e'en the third heaven fairer still and bright,—  
Whence pleasures flow, and love and pious praise,—  
Daughter of Jove, beloved of Phœbus white,  
Lady benign in all thy heart's sweet ways,  
'Tis thou for sure that givest me will and might  
To sing my happiness in such sweet sighs;  
Be praised forever hence thy puissance most wise!

75

"The sky, the earth, the sea, and even hell,—  
Each feels in it thy subtle potency,  
O glorious Light; and, if the truth I tell,  
Plants, seeds and herbs feel't too as equally;  
Birds, beasts, and fish to its eternal spell  
Subject themselves, if fair the season be;  
Men, too, and gods—no creatures can endure  
Unless still in the world is felt thy presence sure.



76

“ ’Twas thou, O goddess fair, Jove first didst stir  
 Those high effects to try and to achieve  
 Through which all things that are, occur;  
 And often yet, when mortals’ deeds him grieve,  
 Thou dost him soothe that we may not incur  
 Deservéd woe, but joy instead receive;  
 Thou in a thousand forms hadst thy behest  
 When of him thou didst make now this or that request

77

“Thou, fiery Mars to thy sweet pleasant will  
 Dost render humble, and dispel his ire;  
 Base thought thou dost despise, and him dost fill,  
 Who sighs for thee, with lofty pride and fire;  
 And, through thy sovereignty, thou grantest still  
 Who merits them the fruits of his desire;  
 Gentle and courteous thou makest all  
 Who gladly let thy fire and flame upon them fall.

78

“Thou keepest, goddess fair, in unity  
 The lots of men, their realms and provinces  
 Through all the world; all friendships spring from thee,  
 And all their fruits, in sooth, and essences;  
 Thou only knowst the secret quality  
 Of everything that now created is;  
 And so thou dost perform that men admire  
 E’en though they cannot look on thy most potent fire.

79

“Thou settest laws for the wide universe,  
 Through which it can its being firm maintain;  
 And to thy son no wight can be adverse,  
 For all who lean on him themselves sustain;  
 And I, who with my prate was late perverse  
 And tow’rd him rude, do now confess it plain—  
 I am, as it befits, enamoured now  
 As ne’er I could express by any word or vow.

80

"For this if any man me reprehend,  
It irks me naught; he knows not what he says;  
Valiantly Hercules will me defend,  
For he himself could not escape Love's ways,  
And, in his wisdom, still doth them commend;  
And whoe'er hides him not neath shame's black rays,  
That man will not hold me in great disdain  
For Love—which Hercules e'en found was noble gain.

81

" 'Tis thence I love and, mid thy benefits,  
I follow that that pleasures me the more,  
In which all great delight and joyaunce sits  
(When rightly my heart craves love's goodly store).  
Yea, that love pleases most and most befits  
Which in sweet beauty goes all things before!  
In such high love I Criseis pursue,  
In whom such virtued, holy excellence I view!

82

" 'Tis this, that in me now such joy doth raise  
And always will, if that I keep me wise;  
'Tis this, O goddess, makes me so to praise  
All lucent virtue that within thee lies,—  
For which, I Heaven thank, no arms have ways  
To wrest me from thy clear-lit face and eyes,—  
In which I saw thy virtue pictured so  
That all thy lucid puissance glistened there aglow.

83

"I bless the time, the year, the month, the day,—  
Nay more that very hour and moment I would bless,—  
When chastest Criseis, fair and blithe and gay,  
First showed my eyes her witching beauteousness;  
Nor yet to bless thy son would I delay,  
Whose grace to me in virtue is no less,  
Kindling my love to her as servant true,  
Putting my peace in those her eyes so fair to view.

84

“And blessed I would call those fervent sighs,  
Which for her sake I’ve driven from my breast;  
And blessed too the tortures and the cries,  
Which made me find through love love’s perfect rest;  
While to those sweet desires drawn from her eyes,  
More fair than others’, should be praise addressed;  
And unto thee my highest thanks I lift  
Because thou shewest me so high and blest a gift.

85

“But higher yet great Jove I would extol;  
Who to the world gave such a lady dear;  
And unto me, in darkness sunken all,  
The light to see her radiant-shining here,—  
Until in her, from whom high wish might call,  
I felt inflamed and saw my joy draw near;  
Such favours never yet have gods bestowed  
On man, from whom they are, in sooth, more truly owed.

86

“Had I a hundred tongues, and could each speak,  
And had I in my breast a poet’s power,  
All thy, and all their knowledge, were too weak  
E’er to express her virtue’s lofty dower,—  
Her courtesy or yet her pleasaunce meek;  
Whoever can portray them at this hour,  
I pray he now his subtle craft shall lend  
And make me know it better—to a noble end.

87

“And thou, O goddess, canst such craft confer,  
If thou but wish, and much I crave it thee;  
To thee what greater happiness could now occur  
Than so disposing all my hours for me  
That all of them be spent to pleasure her?  
Grant me, O goddess, such a boon to see  
Me who was gathered once in thy embrace,  
And after, taken thence not knowing thy true grace.

88

"Follow who will now wealth or mighty reign;  
War or adventure, hunting, falconry;  
Diana's pastimes, Mars' prodigious pain;  
Henceforth my gaze on Criseis' eyes shall be,  
And all my time I shall hereafter train  
To keep it on their beauty constantly;  
For, as I gaze, they raise me Jove above  
So much they fill my heart with boundless, priceless love.

89

"I have not worthy thanks to offer thee,  
O goddess fair, O fair Eternal Light;  
And muteness e'en now so oppresses me  
I cannot speak; but then, my lady bright,  
Accept the thanks I wish thee honestly;  
Prolong, conceal, correct, and govern right  
Mine ardour now—and hers whom I adore;  
Let not our loves be changelings hence forevermore."

90

Then did this Troil in each chance of war,  
Prove him first chief in arms in every deed;  
And he upon the Greeks so fiercely bore,—  
So bold and brave, if true's the tale I read,—  
They were affrayed by him as ne'er before  
By any man; for now 'twas Love did feed  
With courage high his lofty spirit proud,—  
Great Love, whose servitor he had him late avowed.

91

Or he would go to hunt in times of truce  
With falcon, gerfalcon, or eagle e'en, in hand;  
And, oftentimes, it was with dogs his use  
To chase great bears, boars, lions through the land,  
For smaller game he spurned and did refuse;  
And at such times he would for joy expand,—  
If Criseis he saw,—as blithe and free  
As falcon from a hood new set at liberty.

92

And then of love his speech was all entire,  
Of gracious mien, and full of courtesy;  
To praise all honest men was his desire,  
And from all caitiffs still to keep him free;  
And whate'er youths excelled in youthful fire,  
Adorned with honours 'twas his will to see;  
But them that loved not, much he held in scorn—  
Lost souls, whose villain state was hardly to be borne!

93

And though of royal blood was this our knight,  
And though at will he might in much command,  
Humble he made himself as any wight,—  
As modest as the lowliest in the land;  
For so Love willed, in whom dwells subtle might,  
To make men more for others' pleasure stand;  
Pride, envy, avarice he held in ire  
And from all taint of these he made himself retire.

94

But such great joy could last but little space,  
Thanks to Dame Fortune, cruel and envious,  
Who in this world leaves nothing firm in place.  
For some new chance (and oft it cometh thus!)  
She turned from Troilo her cruel face;  
And all the joy he felt so copious,  
The fruits of Criseis' love, she tore away,  
And for them did him but a bitter grief repay.

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## CANTO FOUR

---

SINCE that the Greeks still held in mighty siege  
The Trojan town, Prince Hector, in whose hand  
Was all the war, sought out from Trojans liege,—  
And from the bravest allies in the land,—  
And picked a group for valour's privilege,  
And with them in the open fields took stand  
Against the Greeks, as oft before he'd done;  
And all the varied chance of melee they did run.

2  
The Greeks advanced and square the encounter met,  
And all that day in battle hard they spent;  
Until the Trojan knights, too sore beset,—  
Their sally failing,—when occasion lent,  
Turned them to flight, as loss and travail let;  
But in that fight by Death were many hent;  
And others still were taken prisoner then,—  
Famed kings, great lords, and numerous  
noble valiant men.

3  
Mongst these were that great hero, Antenor,  
Polydamas his son, and Menesteus,  
Xantippus, Sarpedon, Polynestor,—  
Polites too, and Trojan-keen Rifeus,—  
And others whom to save the brave Hector  
Tried all his might. But 'twas to little use;  
Retreat was forced, and plaints filled all of Troy,  
Though auguries foretold a greater yet annoy.

4

King Priam asked a truce and 'twas declared;  
Whereat for the exchange they gan to treat;  
Ransoms of heavy gold were now prepared,  
Man or a gift should buy man from defeat.  
Soon then as Calchas saw how matters fared,  
He changed his face, and mid the Greeks full fleet  
He got, roaring his complaints,—and howled until  
He had obtained that they would listen to his will.

5

“Trojan I was, my lords,” the seer began,  
“As all of you, methinks, are full aware;  
And if you will recall, I am the man  
Who first brought hope unto your thirst and care,  
And said, when to its end the season ran  
And the due hour came, then should your trumpets blare  
The victory you had won for high emprise,  
When Troy should burn and fall before your  
watching eyes.

6

“The order and the means thereof you know  
And hold from me, as I did demonstrate;  
But though all your desires in time proved so,—  
And at the looked for hour, as I did state,—  
Still in no word of mine your faith you'd show  
If ta'en from sealed or opened book of late,  
However much it seemed my coming here  
Was willed to give you counsel and provide new cheer.

7

“And, since Fate wished it so, 'twas fortunate  
That I by my own skill should find the way  
T' escape the town—so keep the secret great  
That none should know a word of it to say—  
And bring me here alone, when day was late  
And clear sky turning light to brown and gray.  
For come I have and hither with me brought,  
Of all the things I owned, no greater thing than naught.



## 8

“But for my leaving all I nothing care,  
Save for that only daughter young and frail,  
Whom I left back: O parent sans compare  
For cruelty, his offspring so to fail!  
Would God I’d led her safe from there!  
But fear and fury made my courage pale:—  
That is my cause of grief for leaving Troy,  
'Tis that hath robbed from me all of my cheer and joy.

## 9

“Long days I’ve made myself in silence wait,  
Seeing no time when I could make demands  
Of you to ransom her, but now—though late—  
I come to ask this favour of your hands;  
And if you cannot give’t,—if ’tis my fate  
I ne’er shall see her more,—more these lands  
I’ll wander ne’er again; my life I’ll scorn;  
Careless to live or die, in all things then forlorn.

## 10

“Here in your camp is many a Trojan peer,  
Baron and lesser man ye would exchange  
For captured Greeks the Trojans hold in fear;  
To give me one you could with ease arrange,  
And for the price of him, a price not dear,  
Criseis ransom: O thus, I beg, estrange  
From grief, for God’s sweet sake, a wretched wight,  
Grown old—and of all solace void and empty quite.

## 11

“And let no wish, by Heaven I conjure you,  
For great wealth gained through ransoms of these lords,  
Delay you now, when ’tis most certain-true  
That all Troy’s strength and all Troy’s richest hoards  
Are in your hands; and (if I err not too)  
The might of him whose courage yet affords  
To keep Troy locked against your wish, will fail,  
And Hector soon, methinks, in violent death fall pale.”

## 12

And, as he spoke these words, the ancient priest,  
Humble in speech and with a face downcast,  
Watered his cheeks with tears most free released;  
Over his hoary beard and breast they passed,  
Endewing all: and ne'er his prayers he ceased  
Until their piteousness gained ears at last;  
For, when they heard, the Greeks began to shrill,  
"Send Antenor to Troy, let Calchas have his will."

## 13

Such compact made they; Calchas felt content;  
And envoys for the task they soon had chose:  
These came to Priam, told why they were sent,  
And to his sons and lords made honest shows,  
Till Troy's grave king had called a parliament  
The thing to weigh, and answer brief was lent:  
If Greeks to Trojans firm their pledge will hold,  
Trojans will hand to Greeks what prisoners they are told.

## 14

Troil stood near at that great conference  
And heard the Greeks for Criseis make request.  
Sudden his heart was pierced without defense;  
Then Sorrow's quickened thrust him sore oppressed,  
And on his soul grief fell so stern-intense  
He felt he must die, sitting there distressed;  
Only with labour did he keep confined  
As it behooved, the love and sad complainings  
in his mind.

## 15

Then he grew full of anguish and proud fear,  
And he began to wait the dread reply;  
Unwonted was the care fell on him here,  
The while he pondered what was best and why,  
Whether his secret to his brother's ear  
He dared entrust when fortune ill was nigh,—  
If Criseis were to Calchas rendered now,  
How he might hinder that by any deed or vow.

16

On one hand came then Love, that made him feel  
Ready to offer him gainst any fate;  
While on the other Reason's stern repeal  
Gave such proud-high emprise a doubtful rate,  
For might not Criseis (the thought was real)  
Be brought thereby to fears most desolate?—  
So, will-he? nill-he? in his tristful woe  
Between two fires he stood,—the fearful *damoiseau*.

17

And while he brooded in such doleful wise,  
Yet all suspense, the barons still conferred,  
Discussing much whatever did arise,  
What most was needful for what had occurred;  
And when they spake, it was with no surprise  
To him who waited for their answering word,—  
Criseis should be giv'n incontinent,—  
She ne'er had been in any durance held or pent.

18

As a field-lily, then, by plough-share caught  
And notched, falls low beneath the intense sun  
And fades, its late rich colour changed to naught,  
And paleness covering all; so pallour won  
(When into words their counsel full was wrought,  
And Greek and Trojan pledges had begun)  
Till Troil swooned away, struck low by grief  
For peril boundless quite—and loss sans all relief.

19

Then him old Priam seized in quick embrace,  
And Hector and his brothers, too, for fear  
Now moved them all lest worse should prove his case;  
Each sought to succour him to death so near;  
One rubbed his pulse, another bathed his face,  
And each a prudent wight with love sincere  
Laboured to call his spirit back again,  
Though for some little time it naught availed their pain.

20

He lay among his kindred vanquished quite,  
And little breath was left in his pale frame,  
His face showed lifeless,—tinged a deathlike white,—  
Like dead he seemed, and living but in name;  
(Such sorry guise was his in that sad plight  
None saw that wept not for the pain that came),  
For all too cruel was that lofty tone  
He heard, when 'twas declared  
the Greeks should Criseis own.

21

A long time did his stricken spirit stray,  
In darkness lost, ere it recovered all;  
Then, coming back, returned in quiet way;  
Whence he, like one who waked at sudden call,  
Rose sudden to his feet in deep dismay,  
A moment dazed; then, ere wight could fall  
On him and ask what pain 'twas hurt him so,  
He feigned some cause, and scaped  
with his new bitter woe.

22

And tow'rd his palace quickly then he sped,  
Without appeal or sign to any wight;  
So deep on sighs and sorrows had he fed,  
He wished no comrade in his dismal plight,  
And, come unto his room, Prince Troil said  
He so lacked sleep that now of every knight  
He must needs be excused—his servants, too, might leave,  
Closing the windows first; he would not light perceive!

23

To witness what then followed, lady fair,  
I cannot wish at all that thou be near;  
And yet my soul must know such heavy care,  
As fills both memory and mind with fear,  
Though, of itself oppressed, 'twill little dare  
(For so my parting from thee keeps it drear)  
One jot to tell, unless thou give it aid,—  
Thou who hast caused the wound by which 'tis  
still affrayed.

24

To this time blithely have I sung in joy  
All the rich favour Love gave Troilo,  
And what was mingled in it of annoy;  
Now I must turn from joy to sombre woe,  
And even though thou like not mine employ,  
I cannot yet refrain—perforce I know  
Thy heart will change and with new pity view  
Mine own life, given up so whole to grief and rue.

25

But if my wishes ever reach thine ears,  
I pray thee by the love I bear to thee,  
Give respite to my grievous woes and fears,  
And so restore my wonted joy to me,  
Which at our parting turned itself to tears:  
Yea, if my death thou'dst bear aught heavily,  
Return thou soon; for it is cherished naught,  
The life thou leftest me when parting  
pleased thy thought.

26

Prince Troil in his chamber barred and dark  
Stayed desolate,—without that any man  
Suspected aught,—sans fear that men could hark,—  
And there the grief that in his breast now ran  
And made, through misadventure, such sad mark,  
To give release the caitiff then began,  
Opening his heart in such a crazéd way  
He seemed not man but frenzied beast,  
thou wouldest say.

27

Not otherwise a bull which mortal blow  
Hath had, goes leaping madly here and there,  
And, by his wretched roaring, makes all know  
What torture 'tis hath fallen in his lair;  
So Troil struck now, in his mighty woe,  
His head against the wall with wild despair,  
He beat his face and breast most piteously,  
Writhing his arms and hands in bitter agony.

28

His eyes shed tears for pity of his heart  
 In copious weeping, till they almost seemed  
 Two fountains whence abundant waters start:  
 Deep sobs and sad complainings in him teemed,  
 And vain words did him from his courage part;  
 Words that, because the past had been misdreamed,  
 Went wild about, demanding naught but death,  
 Scorning and cursing all,—gods, fate, and mortal breath.

29

But this his frenzy slowly yielded place  
 As length of time did soothe his bitter plaint,  
 When once more on his bed he hid his face,  
 The flame of grief still burning sans restraint,  
 And then, ere time could many moments trace,  
 Arose to weep and sigh,—like zealous saint,—  
 Because one head and breast could never bear  
 The pain he wished to heap them with in his despair.

30

Anon he gan to cry with weeping new:  
 “O Fortune, fickle, unshamed, curséd wight,  
 What evil have I done thee in thy view  
 That thou oppose whate’er gives me delight?  
 Hast thou no joy sans causing me more rue?  
 Why dost thou turn thy wrong face to my sight,  
 Thy favour from me, who have loved thee more,—  
 As, cruel, thou knowst,—and held thee every god before?”

31

“If with my care-free life, so blest in joy,  
 Thou wert displeased, why soughtst thou not in hate  
 To bring to earth the lofty pride of Troy?  
 To make me by my sire’s death desolate?  
 Or bring on Hector some most cruel annoy,  
 On him in whom our hope rests all of late?  
 Why robb’dst thou not Polyxena of life,  
 Or Paris e’en —or Helen his fair Spartan wife?”



32

If Criseis were only left to me  
And all else lost, I'd gain in having her  
And ne'er repine at other penury;  
Yet always thy fell darts themselves bestir  
To prey on things that stir thy jealousy;  
To show thee fickle thou dost aye prefer;  
To take away my joy gives thee delight,  
I would that thou hadst slain me ere I knew this plight!

33

"Alas, O Love, O sweet and pleasant Lord,  
Who knowest all that in the world doth lie,  
How shall my grieving life itself record,  
If I lose that sole good, my peace, I cry?  
O then, sweet Love, who only dost afford  
To my mind solace, hear before I die!  
What shall I do if she is ta'en from me,  
To whom, by thy great grace, I gave myself all free?

34

"Henceforth, wherever I may dwell, I'll weep  
And always dolorous stay, so long as life  
Within mine anguished body lodgeth deep.  
O soul, so caitiff made by pain and strife,  
From that most wretched flesh alive to leap  
Should please thee well. O soul, with sorrows rife,  
Escape my body, follow Criseis!  
O wherefore not escape such grievous woe as this?

35

"O sad mine eyes, whose solace dwelt entire  
In the sweet face of winsome Criseis fair,  
How shall ye thrive henceforth? In grief most dire  
Ye are from now, since 't dwells no longer there,  
And all your power must from hence expire,  
Conquered and vanquished by my tears and care.  
In vain ye shall now other virtues view,  
If she, your health and safety, be thus torn from you.



36

"O Criseis mine, sole blessing fair and sweet  
Of this deep-stricken soul that calls on thee,  
Who will mine anguish now give comfort meet?  
Who now bring peace to my love's agony?  
If thou depart, it fits that death come fleet  
To this poor wight, who loves thee utterly;  
And I shall die a death all undeserved  
Because the scornful gods my fault have wrong observed.

37

"Alas, if yet thy parting were delayed  
Such time that through long use I bear it might,—  
Or yet prepare to feel it less dismayed,—  
I would not say I should not with some right  
Oppose thy going hence by fate betrayed;  
Nay, had it been more clear before my sight,  
Through longer thought, to part had easier been,—  
To part, whence now it seems that all my woes begin!

38

"O evil-looking, ancient-doating seer,  
What ecstasy hath moved thee? what disdain  
Hath made thee, Trojan, love the Greeks so dear  
Thou must desert to them down on the plain?  
Above all prophets, thou wert honoured here,  
Native and stranger!—Thou filthy stain  
Of treason, evil rede, deceit, annoy—  
Oh would I had thee at my mercy's will in Troy!

39

"O would thou'dst died the day thou hadst escaped—  
Hadst fallen dead before the Hellenes' feet,  
When first thy lips so madly gaped,  
Demanding her who made to love so sweet!  
What heavy grief thy coming here hath shaped,  
O loathéd cause of all the woe I meet!  
Would that the spear that pierced Protesilaus,  
Had been deep driven in thy heart by Menelaus!

40

"If thou wert dead, then should I live secure,  
For who would then my Criseis demand?  
And wert thou dead, I were not left for sure,  
For Criseis would not part from Troy's dear land;  
If thou wert dead, no griefs could then endure  
Equal to these that now my joy withstand.  
Therefore thy life is of my death the cause—  
And of the curse that will not let my dolour pause."

41

A thousand sighs more burning hot than fire  
Thus issued from his deep love-smitten heart,  
Mixed with laments and words of sad desire,  
Without respect how each word played its part;  
And so these plaints availed through power dire  
The youth could sigh no more by any art  
And fell asleep; but yet he slept not long,  
For in a trice again he felt his grief grow strong.

42

Another sigh; and to his feet he rose,  
Went to the door which he had lately barred,  
Opened it wide, and called a varlet close—  
A trusty wight—and cried, "Stare not so hard,  
But stir thee, fellow, from thy soft repose;  
Bring Pandar here; let nothing him retard."  
Then straight he turned him to his grief-dark room,  
Filled yet with sighs and clinging drowsiness and gloom.

43

Pandaro came, already knowing well  
That which the Greek envoys had asked full plain,  
And how the Trojan lords agreeing fell  
To render Criseis to her sire again:  
Whence in his face full great dismay did dwell:  
And there to Troil, pondering still his pain,  
Entered the prince's dark and silent room,  
All impotent to speak a word of cheer or gloom.

44

But Troil, when he saw his comrade well,  
Ran and embraced the worthy Pandaro,  
Yet wept so sore no poet e'er could tell  
The story of his tears; and then for woe  
The anxious friend, too, into weeping fell  
In that same wise; and both in moaning low  
Continued some time then to weep and mourn,  
Saying no words so were their troubled hearts forlorn.

45

At last when Troil found him calm again,  
To Pandar he began: "Death's man am I,  
For all my joyaunce now is turned to pain,  
From wretched me my comfort all doth fly  
At envious Fortune's will, and in its train  
My solace and my pleasaunce I descry.  
Hast not yet learned my cause for misery—  
That Criseis by the Greeks is torn away from me?"

46

And Pandar answered, who had wept no less:  
"Alack! I wish thy words were not so true,  
Alack for me, whose faith would ne'er confess  
Thy joy, so sweet and pure, could change to rue,—  
Fail thee so soon; nor could I ever guess  
That harm, save first it showed itself to view,  
Could come and could despoil thee so complete!  
Now all my lore I see is turned into defeat!

47

"But yet, why give thyself such anguish now?  
Why feel thine is such grief and such torment?  
Thou'st had what thou hast willed, I trow;  
Thou oughtest then in heart feel more content:  
These and all other woes to me allow,  
To me who long have loved, but ne'er been sent  
Or shown one favour of the dame I woo,—  
The lady who alone can give me peace for rue.

48

“And, look thou too, old Troy is full enough  
Of ladies fair and gracious to the eye!  
And, as thy virtue never won rebuff,—  
Choose e’en the fairest, and she’ll make reply,  
‘No boon could seem to her of richer stuff  
Than *devoir* paid by thee with love and sigh’:  
If therefore, being sage, thou Criseis forego,  
Thou canst of many others gain great grace I know.

49

“And men in sooth I oft have heard declare  
That new love always chases old away;—  
Some new *amour* will banish that despair  
Thou feelest now, if thou do as I say.  
Wish not to die then for this lady fair,  
Wish not to be thine own foe so to-day:  
Dost think through tears to have her back again?  
Through tears, lest she should go,  
dost hope her to retain?”

50

And Troil, hearing Pandar, wept anew  
And still more strong, protesting, after, brave:  
“I pray God send at once the death that’s due,  
If ever I commit excess so grave;  
Let other damsels be as fair to view  
And blithe as they may wish; none ever gave  
To earth such beauty, I confess, as she  
To whom I’m vowed and whose in all I wish to be.

51

“From her fair eyes have flown the subtle sparks  
Which have inflamed me with their amorous fire;  
A thousand times they’ve left in mine their marks,  
And gently borne with them sweet Love’s desire  
Straight to my heart,—to shine there in its darks  
As Amor willed; and there gan first inspire  
That ardour whose great fervour still directs  
My valour when it moves to its most true effects.

52

“However I might wish ’t, who wish it not,  
I could not check its potent warmth and glow,  
Nay, if ’twere greater, I should grieve no jot;  
And more—from only Criseis, I know,  
To part were grief and such a bitter lot  
My love-flamed heart could not endure the blow:  
No other dame is there (and none I scorn)  
Who is her peer in aught,—and none such e’er was born!

53

“Then how could other’s comfort e’er aspire,  
Or even Love himself, that I should turn  
To any other lady my desire?  
Within I have to bear enough heart-burn,  
But rather would I yield me to the fire,—  
To woes yet more extreme,—than I should yearn  
To put my mind on other lady’s eyes,—  
Or leave, O god of love, this world of joy and sighs.

54

“Death and the sepulchre alone can part  
The firm, true love which now gives life to me:  
And whatsoever ill on me may start  
They two, with it, may lead my soul, and see,  
Down in the lowest hell, it suffer smart:  
For there they’ll weep for Criseis verily,—  
The lady whose I’ll be where’er I dwell  
If love doth not, through death, forget to bear all well.

55

“Therefore, pardee, cease thou, my Pandaro,  
Thy talk of other mistress for my heart—  
To enter therein, where henceforth, I know,  
I will keep Criseis always with love’s art,  
The sure seal of my joys,—however woe  
Now plague my mind, which labours in hard part,  
Because she goes away of whom we speak,—  
Because we see no way to make the change we seek.

56

"Cease then to babble inadvisedly;  
For speech to make my pain less is but loss,  
And can be nothing more, we two shall see:  
For, Pandar, that is folly sheer and dross,  
Too crude to cherish in the heart of thee;  
For every grief that moves our life across  
Doth pass, whatever curséd Fortune brings;  
And that man tells no truth who sayeth other things.

57

"But tell me, if my love means aught to thee,—  
If still thou think it is a thing so light,  
To change one's love, as late thou spakest me,—  
Why thou'st not changed thy path, as is thy right?  
Why let thy love cause thee such cruelty  
Or, still severe, keep thee in such a plight?  
Why dost thou not thyself new dames pursue  
That thou thy life with greater peace mayst hence imbue?

58

"If thou, inured to live in love's torment,  
Hast not had power to seek new mistress fair,  
Can I, who lived with Love in glad content,  
Hope so to drive him from me in my care,  
As thou dost urge? And, prithee, what is meant  
That now I see quick grief to me repair?  
I am in love in very different wise  
From that that in thy mind thou idly dost devise.

59

"In faith, Pandar, once Love a mind doth seize  
And enters there to be its joy supreme,  
Believe me thou, from there Love never flees  
Nor can be driven; although sometimes, I deem,  
In course of time Love wanes by slow degrees,  
Unless he sprang from poverty extreme,  
Or grief or death or absence from one's may!  
So have fared many men, it haps, before to-day.

60

“What shall I then,—I, sad misfortunèd wight,—  
If I lose Criseis in such a way  
As I have lost her? Why, too, is it right  
Antenor be exchanged for her, O say!  
Alack! death were more welcome in my sight;  
And never to have seen the light of day,  
More blest! My heart despairs. Come Death, draw near,  
O come—lest I too long in love should languish here.

61

“O Death, thou’lt be to me as soft and sweet  
As life appears to him who lives in joy;  
Thy face, once horrid, now as fair I’ll greet,  
O hie thee here and finish mine annoy;  
O tarry not, for in my veins such heat  
Is kindled now it must me soon destroy;  
Let thy harsh blow bring comforting to me,  
And haste thee to a heart that sore desireth thee.

62

“Slay me; for God’s sweet sake do not consent  
That I so long in this dull world should thrive;  
And let me see my heart, in glad content,  
Part from my corpse,—O let it, Death, arrive,—  
I ask it thee pardee; what more is meant  
To give me joy than not to be alive?  
Thou slayest so much good at thine own will  
To slay, and pleasure me, thou hast the power still.”

63

Thus wept in deep lament Prince Troilo,  
And Pandar likewise did, for very grief,  
Yet often sought to ease his friend’s deep woe  
And piteously he offered him relief;  
But comfort nothing helped the cruel blow,  
While still his weeping grew beyond belief  
Continually—and thereto, his lament,  
So much for his sad fate had swelled his discontent.



64

And Pandar answered him: "My dearest friend,  
If my appeals in nothing pleasure thee,  
And if to thee it seems too cruel end  
To part from her, anon or presently,  
Why not accept the power gods do lend  
Now to thy life and seize her instantly  
To bear away, as Paris stole from Greece  
Helen, that flower of dames, who wrecked  
the world's long peace?

65

"Wilt thou in thine own Troy not venture e'en  
To carry off a dame that pleaseth thee?  
Thou wilt,—if trust at all on me thou lean:  
Chase off thy grief; chase 't off and so make flee  
Thine anguish and these woes too plainly seen;  
Dry up thy tears and let thy face be free;  
Let thy great spirit show itself once more,  
To make sweet Criseis ours, my prince, I do implore."

66

And then to Pandar Troil made reply:  
"I see, my friend, to drive away my pain  
Thou wilt at nothing stop but all must try:  
Yet all thou urgest, with other things as plain,  
I've thought on much and raised before mine eye,  
The while I'd weep and yield to grief again,—  
To grief which somehow doth increase my power,  
Keen though its shock hath been to make me pause  
and cower;

67

"But not therefore could I feel aught constrained  
Good counsel, in love's fervour e'en, to scorn;  
Rather I thought and saw no whit was gained,  
The time forbade such errour to be born;  
For, if a citizen could be regained,  
And Antenor at that, I much should mourn  
To break my oath and fealty unto Troy:  
Hap then what might, I never could such means employ.

68

“Besides I fear with rapine violent  
 Much I should harm her honour and her fame;  
 Nor do I know she'd therewith be content.  
 I only know she loves me, sans all blame.  
 Therefore my heart feels it in no way bent  
 To try such means as wish that her good name  
 Be safe, on one side; on the other, fear  
 To like unpleasant things they would not have appear.

69

“Then had I weened to ask by special grace  
 My father Priam should give her to me;  
 Then thought that were like accusation base,  
 And making known things done in secrecy;  
 I dared not hope he'd hearken to my case  
 And give her me through breaking utterly  
 The things he pledged; but knew he'd try to say  
 She was not of my rank,—he'd find some royal may.

70

“So still I weep and in love's maze remain,  
 Weary and unaware what I may do;  
 Because my might, whatever it may gain  
 Through strength in love, I feel is failing too;  
 On every side my hope flees off in pain  
 And causes of my grief grow ever new:  
 I wish that I had died that luckless day  
 When I was first inflamed with passion in this way.”

71

And Pandar answered then: “Do as thou please;  
 But, were I now enamoured as thou art,  
 With show of truth, I'd bid farewell to ease,  
 And, whatsoever guilt became my part,  
 Did I possess the power thou canst seize,  
 (Unless that power some strange force rose to thwart),  
 I'd use it all and bear her safe away—  
 Whoso might be displeased or whoso might gainsay.

72

“Do not conceal thy love so subtilely,  
As now appears thou wouldst, when love’s good still  
Heats the enamoured soul incessantly,  
While love plagues yet with wild and hearty will,  
Hath his own way, and then so forcibly  
Exposes thee to every torment ill;  
Wish rather thou to be checked by restraint  
Than die with torture in thy sad and sore complaint.

73

“And thine is not the task a dame to steal  
Who would be distant from thy high intent,  
But such a one as seeks no greater weal;  
And if for this, great ill to thee were lent  
Or blame assigned, thou hast the power, I feel,  
Soon to succeed in it to thy content,  
Or yet to give her back; and Fate doth aid  
Him who is brave, who makes the timid more afraid.

74

“And if this thing should bring her any grief,  
Quite soon thou’lt have thy peace with her again;  
And that she’d suffer not, is my belief,  
So much thy love for her would ease her pain:  
And for her fame she would soon feel relief  
For that she lost, and little time complain:  
To speak thee sooth, the shame that Helen bore  
This lady glad would bear could she thus  
    please thee more.

75

“Pluck ardour then, be valorous once more,  
Love holds no idle laws of faith or care;  
Show of thy courage now its greatest store,  
And for thyself reward more rich prepare.  
I’ll stand with thee each peril new before,  
As valiant as my power lets me dare.  
Deign but to act, my gracious friend, and lo!  
The gods will aid our cause with every well-struck blow.”

76

The prince, who each word understood full well,  
Replied then to his friend: "I am content  
If in me now flames hotter yet did dwell  
By twice a thousand times,—if my torment  
Were greater than it is,—this must I tell,  
To satisfy 't I'd ne'er let my intent  
Do any courteous dame one tiny ill,  
'Twere better die than have her feel my selfish will.

77

"Then up, and let us stand no longer here;  
Bathe thou thy face; return we both to court;  
Beneath our laughter let no grief appear  
(The people nothing know of any sort,  
And we should bring them all to marvelling near  
By telling what both know); observe thy part;  
Keep thou my secret hid; I'll find a way  
So that this very eve with Criseis I may speak and stay."

78

Meantime Dame Rumour swift, who tells the true  
And false with equal joy and eagerness,  
About all Troy with readiest wing she flew  
And in words, careless-freed from all duress,  
Was whispering when and why and who,  
As Grecian envoys, did old Troy address,—  
How each did act,—how Priam his oath swore  
To give Greece Criseis and have back Antenor.

79

And this news soon the lady Criseis heard,  
Who for her father cared no more,  
And, "O sad heart of mine," came first her word  
Within, while deep she gan her lot deplore,  
As well one might whose love was all transferred  
To Troil, whom she loved all things before;  
And, in her fear that what men said was true,  
She dared not ask one question in her care and rue.

80

But, as we often see when new things chance,  
One lady to another oft will go,  
If well disposed her pleasure to advance;  
So on the day that brought fair Criseis woe,  
Full many came as 'twere to sing and dance  
In pious joy with her for faring so.—  
All gan explain what late occurred in Troy,—  
The pact—her being soon exchanged, these ladies coy!

81

While one began, "In sooth, I feel so glad  
Now thou canst to thy father to sojourn,"  
A second would declare, "It makes me sad  
To see thee part with no thought to return,"  
And still a third, "Through her can peace be had  
'Tween us and Greece, for Calchas, you discern,  
As ye have heard, if we but with him treat,  
Can make men, as he wills, take vict'ry or defeat."

82

This and much other foolish, female prate  
She listless heard, like one who was not there,—  
Sans answering,—so mean she held its state;  
And yet her face was all too soft and fair  
To hide those gentle thoughts of Love and great,  
Come in her heart with what she heard of care;  
In body she was present, but her mind  
Roamed senseless otherwhere her Troilo to find.

83

And these mistaken ladies, who believed  
They offered comfort, stood and chattered so  
That deep within she felt her soul aggrieved  
And vainly, knew she bore another woe,  
Deep down, which they had never yet perceived,  
Who stayed at hand; but oft she bade them go,  
Like a great lady gracious in her mien—  
Though much she wished from them to steal away  
unseen.

84

But she could not hold back each weary sigh,  
And now and then would shed a little tear  
That gave sign of the pain and suffering high  
To which her soul was now constrained by fear:  
But those dull wights who circled her so nigh,  
Believed that Criseis wept in grief sincere  
Because she must from them so soon depart,  
Who were, they weened, the near'st companions  
of her heart.

85

So each one sought to offer comforting  
Merely for that that in no sense her grieved,  
And through her speech consolement true to bring,  
(Since parting from her only, each perceived  
A cause of pain), and so increased the sting,  
Rubbing the heel that itched to be relieved;  
For parting from them gave her naught of care,—  
'Twas leaving Troilo would be so hard to bear.

86

But, after prattling thus much time in vain,  
As ladies do, they took themselves away;  
When she, made anxious by her bitter pain  
And overcome, did slowly from there stray  
And entered soft her little room again  
To let her weeping have, alone, its sway—  
Sans seeking one maid's counsel in her woe;  
And there she wept as dame ne'er wept on earth below.

87

In desperate grief she fell upon her bed  
And sobbed as poet never could relate;  
Beating her white breasts sore and red,  
Beseeching death to end her mortal state,  
For from her now all life's delight was fled  
And Troil she must leave, by harshest fate;  
Her yellow tresses fair she tore and broke,  
And always asked for death in every word she spoke.

88

“O me, of ladies most unfortunate!  
O wretched me, where fare I now?” she cried.  
“Alack that I was born to such estate!  
How shall I leave thee, sweet my love and pride?  
Why at my birth did I not suffocate?  
O would I ne’er had had thee at my side  
Or seen thee ne’er, my love, since Destiny  
Steals now my soul from thee and thine, alack, from me!

89

“What shall I do, in this my life of woe,  
When I can no more hope my love to see?  
How shall I bear to part from Troilo?  
I’ll ne’er eat more, nor drink, of certainty;  
And, if my dazéd soul refuse to go  
Of its own will and leave my body free,  
Famine shall drive it thence beneath my power,  
Since changing bad for worse is henceforth  
my poor dower.

90

“Now widowed shall I be in very deed,  
Since I must needs from thee, my love, depart;  
Heart of my life, let henceforth widow’s weed  
Be witness black to all my pain and smart.  
Alas, what cruel thought is that—and need  
That forces me from thee, my life, my heart!  
Alas, how can I suffer all the woe  
When I see Fortune part me from my Troilo?

91

“How can I then without my soul endure?  
For, doubtless, with our love ’t will linger here  
And, at thy side, lament our parting sure,—  
Our parting dolorous, for ’tis right and clear  
It so should do for love so good and pure;  
Alas, my Troil, must it then appear  
Thou’lt see me part and bear it—nothing try,  
By love’s main strength or force, to keep me here  
and nigh?



92

"I'll go away e'en when I do not know  
If e'er I'll see thee more, my heart's delight;  
And what wilt thou do then, who lovest me so?  
Wilt thou endure the dolour of thy plight?  
I cannot bear it now; too much of woe  
Breaks my sad heart—and all I see is night;  
Yet, an it break more soon, then shall I be,  
Thereafter from mine all too grievous anguish free.

93

"And O my father—faithless, unjust man  
To Troy, thy country, curséd be the part  
Through which into thy breast such evil ran  
As made thee wish with Greeks to join in heart,  
And Trojans leave! Would God, in hell's dark span  
Thou now wert dead and dead with thee, thy art.  
Thou wicked dotard, who at life's last end  
Didst so to practice guile thy soul and genius bend.

94

"O me, alas! Alas, O woe is me!  
Whose lot it is to bear the punishment  
For thine offence; for undeservedly  
A life of pain befalls me innocent.  
O pious Light, celestial Verity,  
Dost thou permit thy justice to be bent  
So, when one sins, another weeps—as I  
Who have not sinned, and thus for dolour lift my cry?"

95

O who could ever tell in words complete  
The sighs this Criseis breathed in her lament?  
(In sooth not I, whose speech fails of the feat,  
So cruel was her grief and great torment.)  
But, while she her complaints did so repeat,  
Pandaro came, gainst whom no door stayed pent;  
And right into her bower then he passed,  
Where still he found her weeping bitter tears and fast.

96

He saw her lying prostrate on her bed,  
All given o'er to sobs and moans and sighs,  
Her face and breast wet with the tears she shed;  
And still, it seemed, desire was in her eyes  
Yet more to weep; and all dishevelléd  
She lay, her torture shown without disguise;  
Yet, when she saw him coming in apace,  
She raised her arms for shame and hid from view her face.

97

And Pandaro began: "Sad was the hour  
That let me rise to-day to see such grief;  
For everywhere seems torment come to power,—  
Lament and anguish, woe without relief,  
Sighs and annoy, and languishing most sour;  
O Jove, what wouldest thou? 'Tis my belief  
Thou dost thy tears from Heaven's heights outpour  
Because our deeds have grieved thee worse than  
e'er before.

98

"But thou, my sister so disconsolate,  
What meanest thou? To war with Destiny?  
Why treat thy body's beauty with such hate,  
With sad lament and boundless cruelty?  
Rise up, turn, turn about; speak, talk, narrate;  
Lift up thy face; dry, dry immediately  
Thy sorrowing eyes; and hark to what I say  
Of words entrusted to me by thy friend to-day."

99

Criseis turned thereat, still weeping so  
No poet's words could true describe the sight,  
And spake, the while she gazed at Pandaro:  
"Alas me now! What will my soul aright?  
Save leave me now and flee to weep in woe?  
Such, wicked chance declares should be her plight,—  
Chance, that doth wish me all these sighs,—these tears,  
Chance, that permits I shall own nothing but my fears!"

100

To see her face was little otherwise  
 Than viewing close a corse, borne to the grave;  
 Her countenance, shaped true in Paradise,  
 An aspect all transformed now sadly gave;  
 Her beauty and the smile once in her eyes  
 Had both deserted her—their fairness so to save;  
 And now about each eye a purple ring  
 Bare witness true to Lady Criseis' suffering.

101

And this, when Pandar saw, who all that day  
 Had spent in weeping sad with Troilo,  
 He sought no more to keep his tears away,  
 But gan, like Criseis to vent his woe,  
 Keeping in check what most he wished to say  
 He let his tears with his fair cousin's flow;  
 At last, when both had long wept sans restraint,  
 Our Pandar tempered first the grief of his complaint,

102

And spake: "Lady, I trust the news I've heard—  
 But am not sure—thy father asked for thee,  
 And Priam King hath, ere this, pledged his word  
 Thee to deliver; so it may well be  
 Thou wilt ere noon to-morrow be transferred,—  
 If truth I've learned. And oh, how cruelly  
 This thing hath touched thy Troil, none can tell,—  
 Who, for his grief at it, prays death to come—and hell.

103

"And so much he and I have wept to-day  
 That I have marvelled whence our tears could flow;  
 Though now at length, my counsel to obey,  
 He hath in some sort checked his cries of woe,  
 And wish to be with thee him more doth sway;  
 To pleasure him I've come to tell thee so,  
 In order that, before ye separate,  
 Ye may together meet somehow in fair estate."

104

And Criseis answered: "Great as is the pain  
Of one who loves self less than Troilo,  
When I hear for my sake he death would gain,  
Then less my pain seems than my love's great woe.  
And now, if e'er heart opened up again  
Through stress of grief, mine shall it open show;  
Now envious Fate exults above my loss,  
Now I behold her secrets freed of guile and gloss.

105

"Parting is hard for me, as Heaven knows,  
But 'tis more hard my Troilo to see,  
In faith to me, afflicted by such woes  
As make death near and dear to hapless me;  
And death, sans hope of gain, less wretched grows  
The more I know how pierced with grief is he;  
Bid Troil, when he will, come hither then—  
And let my anguish have supreme comfort again!"

106

And, that said, back she fell once more supine,  
And to her closed arms did her complaints renew,  
While Pandar called: "Alas, poor cousin mine,  
What wilt thou now? Cannot some cheer ensue  
From thinking that the hour so near is thine,  
When he thou lovest will come before thy view—  
To take thee to his arms? Rise, comfort thee,  
Lest in this thriftless state thy knight discover thee.

107

"And, if he knew that thou wert acting so,  
He'd slay himself, and no wight could restrain;  
And, if I thought to me should come that blow,  
My feet would never lead me here again;  
But, if I could, I'd slay me too, I know,  
And make my soul pursue my friend's in pain.  
Then up, my lady, make thee calm and still  
That thou relieve and not more, thus, provoke his ill."

108

And Criseis answered: "Go; I promise thee,  
 My cousin Pandar, to be more controlled;  
 When thou art gone, I will immediately  
 Rise from this bed and more my courage hold;  
 My pain and all delight, now lost to me,  
 Close in my bolted heart for him I'll fold:  
 Then make him come in his accustomed way,  
 And here he'll find the door still propped,  
 thou mayest say."

109

Pandar found Troilo in anxious thought,  
 His face once more so darkened by his fears  
 That pity in his friend a new grief wrought;  
 But yet he called: "Art thou, as now appears,  
 So caitiff, youth, who once so valiant fought?  
 Thy blessing hath not gone—to cause these tears;  
 Why dost thou then so keep thyself in pain?  
 Thy very eyes seem eyes of one already slain!

110

"Art not, without her, still alive and sound?  
 Canst not give to thy heart strength to endure?  
 Wast born to earth but to her to be bound?  
 Show thee a man; make more thy courage sure.  
 Dismiss these griefs and sighs to some new ground:  
 I have not made delay,—naught could allure  
 Me from the place where I might tell to thee  
 What time I spent with her and what she said to me.

111

"And thou, methinks, dost not one moment feel  
 Half of the pain thy mistress, grieving, knows;  
 Her sighs so fervid hot themselves reveal,  
 Since so this parting gainst her will doth close,  
 Twenty to one thy sighs they overpeal;  
 Wherefore thou shouldst thee more to peace compose,  
 For in thy bitter plight this grace is thine,  
 How dear thou art to her more clearly to define.

112

"I have of her, too, now won thee consent  
Thou shouldest go to her this very eve;  
Exhibit, then, whate'er was thine intent,  
The best demeanour she could wish perceive;  
Soon wilt thou see whatever most is meant  
To give her pleasure, and her mind relieve:  
And more,—perchance the two of you will find  
Ways to assuage your woes and make them  
    seem more kind."

113

And Troilo made answer with a sigh:  
"Good is thy speech, I'll try to bear me so."  
And other things he said, but time drew nigh  
When good it seemed to Criseis to go.  
Then, quickly slipping his friend Pandar by,  
He made him on his way, so free from woe  
It seemed a thousand years he'd been embraced  
In Criseis' arms with joy, ere Fate had him displaced.

114

And Criseis, when the usual time was near,  
Came to him with her torch illumined bright,  
And in her arms received her lover dear;  
And he took her in his (as was his right),  
Though sore by grief oppressed; and, dumb with fear,  
The two could not conceal their heart's wild plight;  
And, speechless both, they kissed in sad constraint,—  
Then recommenced their weeping and excessive plaint.

115

And each clung to the other very tight,  
Each bathed in tears that would incessant flow;  
And, though they tried, to speak they had no might,  
So much their weeping hindered and their woe,—  
Their sobs and sighs, their sorrows grim as night;  
And long their sweet-sad kissing lasted so,  
The while each seemed to drink the other's tears,  
Careless how bitter was their nature, it appears.

116

Then, soon as their vexed spirits were returned  
From th' anguish of their weeping and their sighs,  
Back to the places that they late had spurned,  
Their souls gan soften their despondent cries;  
And Criseis her eyes to Troil turned,  
Sad with her grief's desire—in piteous wise;  
When, broken-voiced, she cried: "Lord of my heart,  
Who wrests thee from me now? How from thee  
can I part?"

117

Then, once again, she fell, head on his breast,  
And swooned away, till all her strength was fled,  
So sore with grief her heart had been oppressed;  
The while her soul tried scape as from one dead;  
And Troil, gazing in her face distressed  
And calling her and hearing no word said,  
Saw that her eyes were veiled and fallen to—  
As those that have assumed death's pale and sombre hue.

118

And, as he that beheld, in double grief  
The anguished youth hath down his Criseis laid,  
Kissing her tear-wet face, as for relief,  
And sought if sign of life might be displayed,  
In any part of her, till sad belief  
Told him no life at all within her stayed,—  
So quite devoid of breath she did appear;  
And then that all was past he cried, and wept in fear.

119

For cold she was and showed no sentiment;  
Wherefore her Troilo, in sooth, he knew  
(For that seemed him the truest argument)  
Her days were ended now of bitter rue;  
Then first he gave him to a long lament,  
And, after, gave him to a service new,—  
He bathed her face, her frail frame did compose,  
And did the wonted things that follow  
death's last blows.



120

These done, he drew his sword from out his sheath  
With that grave courage which was e'er his wont,  
In full prepared to seize on bitter death,—  
So that his soul, which nothing else could daunt,  
Might follow ill-starred Criseis o'er the heath  
And with her there th' infernal regions haunt,  
Since Fate had proved so cruel, Love so hard,—  
And woe persuaded him in life was no regard!

121

But first he called, inflamed with high disdain:  
"Most cruel Jove, and thou accurséd Fate,  
To what ye willed behold me come in pain;  
For Criseis, giv'n me I thought of late  
By your especial favour, now is ta'en,  
Caught from my life by your immortal hate;  
And where she dwells, I know not in this hour,  
Only I see her slain here by your evil power!

122

"And now I leave the world to follow her  
And with her spirit wend, as pleaseth you;  
Perhaps in hell things better may occur  
And I my peace may gain in sighs and rue—  
If, there beyond, men love, as tales defer  
Sometimes, in telling what the pale shades do;  
O, since you do not wish to see me live,  
At least to be with her my soul permission give.

123

"And thou, my city, whom at war I leave,  
And thou, Priam, and ye, my brothers dear,  
Act so with God I burial receive,  
Not far, but to my Criseis' fair eyes near;  
And thou, for whom such dolour doth me grieve  
That from my body now my soul I tear,  
Criseis, welcome me!" he tried to say,  
With breast bared to his sword and ready him to slay.

124

When lo! reviving, Criseis heaved a sigh  
Full of great pain, and called for Troilo;  
And "Sweet, my love" again he gan to cry,  
"Art thou alive?" and wept once more for woe;  
Then raised her in his arms and gan to try  
To soothe her pain through words with love aglow,  
Offered her comfort; till her bruised soul  
Back to the heart returned whence late it frightened stole.

125

But some time yet her spirit, lately strayed,  
Kept silence; till her eyes his sword espied,  
When she began: "Thy weapon, why is't made  
Free of its sheath?" And he, in tears, replied  
And told her how his life escaped its blade;  
And she: "O me, to hear of such a tide!  
If my lost soul had longer stayed away,  
Within this very place thou'dst slain thyself this day.

126

"O woe to me, O heavy dole thou'st said!  
I should not in this life have wished to be,  
After my lord; my breast would soon have bled,  
Pierced by thy sword; great thanks in this I see  
For praising God; but seek we now our bed,  
Where we may speak our woes more quietly:  
When I consider how my torch burns low,  
Then, that the night is almost gone, I know."

127

And there, as other times they had embraced,  
They kissed again, though now 'twas much in tears,  
For joy by bitterness had been replaced;  
Yet peaceful speech and sad, despite their fears,  
Could sans delay on their quick lips be traced,  
Whisp'ring the words that only lover hears;  
Till Criseis began: "O sweet my friend,  
To all the words I say, see that thou well attend.

128

“Since I have learned those tidings ill  
 How my cursed father turned him traitor all,  
 If to deprive me now be Heaven’s will  
 Of thy fair face, I’ll say on none did fall  
 Such pain as I have felt and suffer still;  
 For now in city gay or palace tall  
 I find no cheer; but aye to dwell with thee  
 Only can give me joy, and thou to dwell with me!

129

“Of late my will of all things did despair,  
 Believing nevermore I thee should see;  
 But, since thou’st seen my spirit free as air  
 Wander away, and then return to me,  
 I feel my mind more certain thoughts doth bear,—  
 Useful perhaps, and which I’ll ope to thee  
 Before now further in our souls we grieve,  
 For, perchance even now, we may in hope believe!

130

“Thou knowst my father for me makes demand,  
 And, though him fain I would in naught obey,  
 I must yet go, for Priam doth command,  
 Whose faith must still be kept in every way;  
 So go I must, thou seest, from Trojan land  
 With Diomed, the Greeks’ envoy, they say,  
 When he comes here again. Would Heaven willed  
 He would no more return in times so evil-filled!

131

“Thou knowest, too, that all my kin dwell here—  
 My father save; and all the goods I own  
 Must stay in Troy; and (if my mind is clear  
 And quite returned to me)—’twill soon be shown  
 That peace is sought from peril drawn too near  
 Twixt Troy and Greece; and,  
     once the Greeks have known  
 King Menelaus can his wife regain,  
 Troy shall have peace, and thou and I be near again.

132

“For here I shall return when Troy makes peace,  
Since otherwhere I do not have to go;  
And, if perchance from war Troy scorns release,  
Yet, in a time of truce, I’ll manage so  
I come to town, for, then, much as they please  
Ladies, thou knowest, pass ’tween foe and foe;  
And all my kin will gladly welcome me,  
And cordially desire I visit them, we’ll see.

133

“Then can we both some comfort find again,  
However waiting for it prove annoy;  
For he must seem with courage to sustain  
Life’s loads of grief who’d find life’s gifts of joy,  
Which, after, come in still more pleasant train;  
But now only I see we are in Troy,  
And nothing else, save that more days must go  
While we continue grieving in our paths of woe.

134

“Yet more than this, a greater hope is mine,  
Peace made or not, of soon returning here:  
My father, doubtless, now hath this design,  
Because he thinks some ill to me is near  
Through his late fault,—some force,  
    some blame condign,—  
May, hence, be hurled on me to make him fear;—  
But, once he knows how much Troy honours me,  
He will not much repine if I return to thee.

135

“And wherefore mid the Greeks me shall he hold?  
They, as thou seest, are always armed for fight.  
And if not there, where else can he be bold  
To leave his child? (I cannot see aright.)  
With Greeks he will not trust me, young or old,  
Or feel it safe to let me from his sight;  
So here to send me back, when time allows,  
Will be his wish, I see, whate’er oppose his vows.

136

"He is, thou knowest too, quite miserly  
And, having left goods here, he will incline  
His ear to what I'll say of them, we'll see;  
Yea since they're dear, he'll yield to my design  
Of coming back for their recovery  
Once I have shown him that such power is mine;  
Yea, he will all his avarice employ,  
Spite of all things, and view my coming back with joy!"

137

Then Troil to his lady quite intent  
Listened, and deep her words impressed his mind;  
And all she said, it seemed incontinent  
It must prove true; but faith lagged slow behind  
(So much he loved and feared for his content  
He could not hope so soon his joys to find);  
Yet, in the end, however dim it seemed,  
He bravely sought to trust like one who fought  
and dreamed.

138

A part, thus, of their grief was soothed away,  
And, as it sped, they found new esperance;  
And, feeling less of evil Fate the prey,  
Both of them gan again their amorous dance;  
And, as a bird in spring will lightly sway  
From leaf to leaf and sing for dalliance,  
So did these lovers blithe their joy renew,  
And many happy things did in their talk review.

139

But, since from Troil's mind the weary thought  
Could not escape, that they must separate,  
In such a wise as this new words he caught:  
"O Criseis mine, loved more by me, thy mate,  
Than any goddess to whom praise is brought,—  
And more to be adored! I have of late  
Thinking thee dead, prepared myself to slay,—  
For what life could be mine if thine were not,  
I pray?"

140

“And, certain as is death, of this live sure,  
I yet will slay myself, if to return  
Thou dost not every effort try t’ endure.  
And, how I’ll fare, I cannot yet discern,  
Sans bitter languishment and grief in pure,  
Knowing thee gone; and doubt will ever burn  
In me anew, lest Calchas keep thee there,  
And all not hap, as now thou sayst, so bright and fair.

141

“I do not know if peace tween us will be;  
And, peace or not, I cannot e’er believe  
Calchas will come again to Troy, with thee;  
For, if I do not much myself deceive,  
He could not hope to scape his infamy  
In dwelling here, so much must he retrieve;  
And, if so urgently he seeks thee now,  
He will not instant wish to send thee back, I trow.

142

“Rather he’ll make thee some Greek lord to wed,  
Or prove to thee besieged Troy cannot stand,  
Doubting her doom comes soon to evil head;  
And lie he will, and say on every hand  
Thou art, of all the Greeks, much honouréd;  
And he is so revered in Grecian land,—  
His virtue so much praised,—that, sans annoy,  
I still must fear thou canst not then return to Troy.

143

“And very much they irk me, thoughts like these,  
More than my heart can say, O fair my soul!  
Thou hast, now gathered to thy hands, the keys  
Both of my life and death, and hast them whole,  
And that key, too, to use as thou shalt please,  
Gently or not, to bring me to my goal.  
O radiant star, through whom I find my port,  
Know, if thou leave me now, death soon must be  
my sort!

144

“Therefore, pardee, we must find means and way  
To stay thy going hence, if that can be;  
To some strange clime we’ll bear ourselves away,  
Nor care how Priam’s promises agree  
With future acts, if we escape to-day  
His wrath and ire; and, far beyond the sea,  
Welcome mid other people we shall find,—  
Nations that will us take as lords amid their kind.

145

“Then thither let us flee in secrecy,—  
Go there together thou, my love, and I;  
And what is left in life to thee and me,  
Heart of my body, thou sans whom I die,  
There let me live it joyous and carefree!  
That is my wish, and that my heart’s deep cry—  
If thou deem well—and that is end most sure  
When every other means is too hard to endure.”

146

Criseis sighed and spake assuringly:  
“Dear all my good and all my heart’s delight,  
These things and more may happen presently  
All in such form as thou dost fair recite;  
But, by the darts of Love, I swear it thee,  
That entered have my heart and filled it quite,  
My sire’s commands, his lies,—a Grecian lord,—  
Nothing can turn my love from thee, my soul-adored!

147

“But what thou sayst of fleeing now from here,  
Is not, in my own view, good counseling:  
One must think much in times, like these, severe,  
And to one’s thought, both self and kindred bring;  
For three great faults would to thy sight appear,  
Once we had gone, as thou wouldst urge the thing;  
And one through broken faith we should perceive,  
Which portends more of ill than any men believe.



148

“And, then, ’twould be with peril to thy kin,  
 For if, sans aid and counsel, thou them leave  
 For one poor woman’s love, they’ll have within  
 A fear lest others’ treasons soon them grieve;  
 And,—if my wits I really sharpen thin,—  
 Thou wilt thereon the foulest blame receive,  
 And then the truth will never be believed  
 Save by our only friend, who hath our love perceived.

149

“And if the time require no loyalty,  
 Still war’s great needs abide on every hand;  
 And none his own puissance clear can see  
 Or hope, of his own self, secure to stand:  
 And many men unite them hopefully,  
 For what they risk with others of their land,  
 They risk more sure; who in themselves much trust,  
 And in their goods, soon see their hopes decay to dust.

150

“And more,—bethink thee now, what would be said  
 Among the common folk if thou shouldst go?  
 That ’twas not Love, with burning darts, that sped  
 Thy flight, but fear and cowardice, I trow.  
 Beware that such thoughts take then further head  
 In thee, and let thy heart no more them know  
 If to thy soul thy fame was ever dear,  
 Which of thy valour still doth sound so clear.

151

“And further, think thou of my honour too,  
 And of my chastity, supremely prized,—  
 How infamy would stain their spotless hue,  
 Both be undone, both lost and both despised,  
 And never raised again so pure in view  
 Through any plea or any virtue realized  
 In aught I hence might do, if I should tell  
 A hundred thousand years of living nobly well.

152

"And yet one more thing,—see thou realize  
A truth that chanceth aye in man's affairs:  
There is no thing so vile, as see the wise,  
As wishing that for which one nothing dares;—  
The more one yearns to own that with one's eyes,  
The sooner in one's heart one evil bears,  
If one, with power large the ill to see  
What hath been done, still holds the evil inwardly.

153

"And this our love, that thee doth so delight,  
Doth so because we love in secrecy  
And rarely come to have its peace aright;  
Yea, if thou once shouldst have me wholly free,  
The burning fires would be extinguished quite  
That now flame thee—and me no less than thee;  
Wherefore, if we would have our love stay real,  
As much we wish, we must it more in secret steal.

154

"Therefore take cheer, and vanquish Fortune quite,  
Render her weak and make her turn her back;  
Subject to her control hath stayed no wight  
Who never of a free will felt the lack;  
Pursue her course and measure, in this plight,  
Such steps for thee as make thy sighs more slack,  
For ten days hence, sans any failing thee,  
I will return to stay in Troy continually."

155

"If thou," then answered Troilo, "return  
Within the tenth day, I'll abide content.  
But who, in that long time, some means will learn  
To soothe my grievous woes and languishment?  
Already as thou canst quite well discern,  
I pass no single hour sans grave torment  
If thou'rt not near. O how, then, can I spend  
Ten long, long days before thy steps tow'rd Troy  
do bend?

156

“For God’s sweet sake then find a means to stay  
And go not, if thou any means canst see;  
I know thou art full subtle in thy way,  
If true I grasp reports I hear of thee;  
And that no thought now more doth on me prey,  
Thou seest clear, if true thou lovest me,  
Than this,—that thou dost go; thou canst perceive,  
Once thou art gone away, how sore my life will grieve.”

157

“Alack,” cried Criseis, “thou wilt me slay;  
Too much, in thy beliefs, thou givest me  
Of black wanhope; I cannot trust to-day  
As, when I promised, once I trusted thee;  
Alas, my love, what makes thee fear this way?  
Why lose thy strength of will so utterly?  
Who could believe a man, so brave in war,  
Would so a ten days absence of his love deplore?”

158

“I think thou canst far better it afford  
To take resolve as to thee I have said;  
Be more content with it, O sweet my lord,  
And know for sure that my breast, too, hath bled,  
That my soul, too and heart weep in accord  
As from thy countenance they see me led;  
For more than thou dost think now or suppose  
I feel, as I have felt, my griefs about me close.

159

“Awaiting time hath often recompense  
In gaining time, my love, my Troilo;  
Nor am I, as thou claimst, now wrested hence,  
Because it is to Calchas that I go;  
And do not think in mind I am so dense  
I cannot find a way among the foe  
For coming back to thee, whom more I love  
Than life, and treasure—far all other good above!

160

“And so I pray,—if aught my prayers avail,—  
By that great love I know thou hast for me,  
By my own love, which nothing thee doth fail,—  
For this, my parting now, thou comfort thee;  
For seeing still thy tears and sighs prevail,  
Thou knowest, brings the deepest hurt to me;  
’Tis pity that thou let them plague thee so,  
Thou oughtest rid thee of them by some potent blow.

161

“For thee I hope in sweet desire and joy  
To live, and hope for thee soon to return,—  
And then some means to our delight employ;  
But let me in such guise now thee discern  
As will, before I go, soothe mine annoy  
That then no other pain may in me burn  
Than that great flame of love within my heart;  
Be blithe then, Troil, who my peace and comfort art.

162

“And this I pray,—while I shall absent be,—  
Thou in no other lady take delight,  
Nor let a stranger’s charms take hold on thee;  
For, if I learned, thou must believe of right  
I’d slay myself in mad insanity,  
Superlatively grieving in my plight.  
Oh, couldst thou leave me for another love,  
Thou whom I love as woman ne’er loved man above?”

163

And to her last words Troilo with sighs  
Made answer then: “If I should wish to do  
That that thou touchest on in fearful wise,  
I know not how I could such crime pursue;  
So hath my love for thee grown great in size  
I could not live, should I such evil view.  
The love I bear to thee, and all its cause,  
Unfold I will, and tell in words its noble laws.

164

"'Twas not thy beauty urged my loving thee,  
Which oft is wont to other men ensnare;  
Nor yet thy breeding and thy courtesy,  
Which often seize men's wills all unaware;  
Nor yet thy riches nor thy jewelry  
Caused in my heart the love that stirreth there;  
And still 'tis true, thou art more rich in these  
Than ever lady was who lived in Love's fair ease.

165

"'Twas thy high acts of peerless sov'reignty,—  
Thy worth, thy lofty speech in lordly strain,  
Thy manners wrought of fair gentility,  
Thy charming and thy feminine disdain,  
Which make all lust seem more than vile to thee,  
And more than vile all deeds of vulgar stain,—  
So pure thou art, O potent lady mine,—  
'Twas these that made my heart to thee incline.

166

"And such things years can never wrench away,  
Nor fickle Fortune; and thence 'tis I aspire  
Through anguish, travail, every toil-paved way,—  
Always to have thee close to my desire.  
Alack then, what repose my loss can stay,  
Once thou art gone, my love, my heart's sweet fire?  
I ne'er shall find repose, except in death,  
And only when my woes cease with my mortal breath."

167

And, after much the two had reasoned so  
And wept together, when the dawn drew near,  
They broke off talking of their heart-felt woe,  
And close they both embraced and held them dear;  
And, when the cocks had much begun to crow,  
After a thousand kisses sweet and clear,  
Each rose and to the other spake farewell;  
And they two parted with more tears than I can tell.

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## CANTO FIVE

---

UPON the same day came, then, Diomed  
To give Antenor to his kin in Troy;  
And to him Priam bade Criseis lead,  
So full of dolour, sighs, and sad annoy  
She made the hearts of those who saw her bleed;  
And Troil stood nearby,—and all sans joy  
To sorrow given o'er as never wight  
Was giv'n who dwelt upon this earth and  
knew its light.

2  
Yet true it is, he in his breast did hide  
The battle that was waging furious there,  
So marv'llously that not a man espied  
His sighs or deep lament;—no trace of care  
Showed on his countenance, now fair and wide,  
Although he wished he might alone repair  
To breathe his plaint in some close-hid retreat,  
And at his ease there furiously his woes repeat.

3  
And many things came in his lofty soul  
At seeing Criseis sent to her sire;  
And at *him* most, the cause of all his dole,  
His anger raged and all of Troil's ire;  
Grief gnawed within, and pain without control,  
While he complained: "What more do I require?  
O caitiff wight, 'tis better once to die  
Than live and languish weeping to eternity.

4

"Why not with these my arms, the pact destroy?  
And why not here this Diomede slay?  
Or fell the old man, cause of mine annoy?  
And why not these my brothers here betray?  
Or why not turn to weeping all of Troy,  
To dolorous shrieks? And bring all ills this day?  
O why not carry off my Criseis  
And in some new abode provide my cure and bliss?

5

"Who will gainsay if what I wish I do?  
Why should I not to e'en the Greeks make cry,  
Ask that they Criseis leave with gentle rue?  
Why more delay? Why run not there more nigh,  
And so let all my friends my madness view?"  
But that proud thought and lofty purpose high,  
Fear made him leave, lest Criseis be killed  
And in th' ensuing fray her warm red blood be spilled.

6

And Criseis, when she saw to part was need,  
Just as she was, in that sad company,  
Mounted the horse that stood there as her steed,  
Since go she must, and then full piteously  
She gan, within, with Heav'n to intercede:  
"O cruel Jove, and Fortune cruel to me,  
Where do ye bear me now against my will?  
Why so much doth it pleasure you to see my ill?

7

"Ye wrest me hence, O cruel and pitiless,  
From the one joy that entered e'er my soul;  
Haply ye think to you I shall address  
Honour and sacrifice to slack my dole,  
But in that wish ye are deceived whole;  
For I shall henceforth in my woes express  
Only my scorn of you, while I sojourn  
Afar, and Troil's noble face cannot discern."



## 8

And then she turned, in her proud high disdain,  
To Diomed and said: "Then go we now,  
Let me be shown to thy Greek host more plain,—  
A host that hopes t' escape its woes, I vow,  
When they so subtly gaze on her they gain,—  
And honourable exchange thou mak'st, I trow,—  
A woman rendered for a mighty king,  
A woman for a man, a brave and much feared thing."

## 9

These things she said, and forward spurred her mount  
And only bade her closest friends goodbye;  
But all the lords there clearly could recount  
With what great scorn the lady made her cry:  
Then she was gone,—to take no further count  
Of speech or gossip,—with unseeing eye,  
Away from Troy, where ne'er she should return  
To be with Troilo, as much her soul did yearn.

## 10

But Troil, in the guise of courtesy,  
With more companions, mounted his great steed,  
A falcon on his wrist, and company  
He gave her, far as the wall allowed the deed  
(Though he had gone the whole way willingly  
To Criseis' new home if Priam had agreed);  
But, through that, too much might discovered be,  
And his repute for wit he held in slight degree.

## 11

Meanwhile there came surrendered Antenor  
Back from the Greeks; and Troy's brave youths with fest  
Received their friend to show him honour more;  
And, though that coming back proved sad behest  
To Troil's heart, which Criseis did deplore,  
The prince a fair good mien expressed,  
Making his brother welcome cordially  
And bidding Pandar ride with him for chivalry.

12

And, being now where they must take their leave,  
He and Criseis somewhat nearer drew  
And gazed each in the other's eyes to grieve,  
Nor could the lady check her plaint and rue,  
When each the other's right hand did receive  
And Troilo accosted her anew  
In soft accents (but such that she could hear)  
And said, "Return, lest I should die in pain and fear."

13

He spake no more but turned his gallant steed,  
While all his face grew crimson deep, and red;  
Nor breathed one little word to Diomed,  
Who, shrewdly all the pretty business read  
Of the two lovers' love in very deed,  
With diverse thoughts arising in his head.  
But what he thought himself he softly told,  
Resolving secretly to keep his plans in hold.

14

Her father welcomed her with much ado,  
As if his love to her had been most great;  
But she stood still and modest in his view,  
Tortured within, in life made desolate,  
Grief filling every vein with bitter rue,  
For still she kept her heart to Troil true;  
Which, all too soon, was bound to change its view  
And him relinquish for another lover new.

15

And back to Troy now turned Prince Troilo  
Sadder of soul than e'er was mortal wight—  
And sure ne'er tortured fellow showed such woe  
As Troil did in face, poor broken knight!  
Dismounted at his palace, sad and slow,  
Pensive as ne'er before in any plight,  
He would not bear what any man might say,  
But in his lonely chamber hid himself away.

16

Here to the grief he had till then restrained,  
He gave full vent, and loud for death he cried;  
And of that blessing much he now complained  
That seemed now lost,—and more, he even sighed  
Because none in the court had knowledge gained  
Of that hid love he had with Criseis plied;  
And in such deep lament he passed the day,  
Nor would he suffer slave or friend to come his way.

17

And, if that entire day was passed in woe,  
'Twas nothing checked when night came on obscure,  
For tears and grief did then redoubled flow,  
So much night made his bitter fortune sure;  
He cursed the day that he was born below,—  
All gods and goddesses and great nature,—  
Nor less his sire, who did the word concede  
That Criseis to the Greeks his vassals thence might lead.

18

And then himself he cursed for cowardice,  
That he had let her go so passively,  
Had not resolved to act in firmer wise,  
Had not more willed away with her to flee,  
Had not done this nor made that sacrifice,—  
Repentant still, and wishing death to see;  
It seemed because he'd made no one demand  
They had not given her most freely to his hand.

19

And then he turned him much, now here now there;  
And all the while tossed sadly on his bed,  
Forever weeping in his wild despair:  
“And what a night is this!” he cried and said,  
“When what it is with past nights I compare!  
When I could kiss her little mouth so red,  
Her breast so white, her face, my lady's eyes,—  
And draw her to me close, my queen, for love's emprise!

20

"And, while she kissed me back, in sweet converse  
We passed those hours of blithe festivity;  
But now I lie alone to weep the worse,  
Doubtful if e'er such nights come back to me  
To bring their joy; and so great is my curse  
I only pillows kiss; though love, I see,  
Burns fiercer flames as hope doth lesser grow  
Through that high grief that presses on and on my woe

21

"What shall I do or what, forsooth, expect,  
O wretched wight, of that which I may do?  
If my mind finds it sadness to reflect  
How Criseis went, why further then pursue  
A hope for power now completely wrecked?  
A lover finds repose but bitter rue,  
Because therein he only makes pretense—  
And still lives over, night and day, the past events."

22

And Pandar him that day could not come nigh,  
Nor other man; but, when the new dawn came,  
He had his old friend called forbye,  
To talk to him of his dear Criseis' name  
And, by that means, relieve his heart's sad cry.  
Then Pandar sped him there, who well could frame  
Pictures of what the prince had done that night  
And what the youth yet wished might still take place  
aright.

23

"O Pandaro," then breathed our Troil, faint  
Through his great moaning and his long lament,  
"What shall I now? For love still, sans constraint,  
Burns in me, like a furnace ill content,  
And I can find no rest from love's complaint?  
What shall I now? When grief me so hath hent,  
When Fortune hath become my enemy,  
And my sweet leman is so wholly lost to me?

24

“And if my Criseis I am no more to see,  
O would I had that moment fallen dead  
When, caitiff-like, I let her part from me!  
O blessing sweet, dear joy unmeasured,  
O lady fair, for whom I lived in fee;  
O sweet my soul, that once with comfort fed  
These eyes of mine that now are streams of tears,  
Dost thou not see I die? Wilt not destroy my fears?

25

“Who sees thee now, O sweet my soul so fair?  
Heart of my body, who sits now with thee?  
Who listens now, or with thee talketh there?  
That 'tis not I is but more grief to me.—  
Say what thou dost? In thee is any care  
For me in mind, or out of memory  
Hast thou put me since thou art with thy sire?  
And is it thence I now live in such torment dire?

26

“What now thou hearst me say, my Pandaro,  
I have been saying through the whole long night,  
For no sleep was allowed by my love's woe;  
Or, if forsooth sleep in my grief and plight  
Found any place, it nothing helped my throe;  
Because in sleep I only dreamed of flight,  
Dreamed only I was in sad realms alone—  
Dreamed only into hostile hands I had been thrown.

27

“And such annoy is it that to perceive,  
And so my heart is moved through it to fear,  
That it were better then I go and grieve:  
And oftentime great trembling draws so near  
It shocks and stirs me till I full believe  
I fall from heights to depths, as would appear;  
Then, waked, I call on Love and Criseis,—  
Now begging death, now craving pity new—and bliss.

28

“Just as thou hearst, so wretched I have grown  
 For my own self in grief and her absence,  
 More sorrowful than e’er I thought to own;  
 Alas, I must confess in impotence  
 That still I hope for aid in vain, alone;  
 That still unto myself I make pretence  
 I see her coming back; but then my heart,  
 That loves, consents not, though to call it tries its art.”

29

And after long he spake in such a wise,  
 Pandaro answered, grieving for his woes  
 And much inclined himself to dolorous sighs:  
 “My Troil, tell me now,—if e’er repose  
 And end thy sadness is to give its cries,—  
 Dost thou not think that others feel the blows  
 Love gives,—and others feel them unconsolated  
 When they must break the amorous ties  
                   they fain would hold?

30

“Full many others are enamouréd  
 As thou; and, by Minerva’s head I swear,  
 They have in misadventures more been led  
 Than thou, for certainty in love seems rare.  
 And they have not surrendered them to dread,  
 As thou, to live in dolour harsh and care;  
 Rather they strive, lest grief shall more increase,  
 To check its sway through hope—  
                   in hope to find sweet peace!

31

“And ’tis thy *devoir* now the like to do:  
 If, as thou sayst, within the next tenth day  
 She promises to come back to thy view;  
 That is not being long enough away  
 T’ excuse thy waiting in such sombre hue,  
 Thy moping guise, thy crying ‘Weleday’!:  
 I wot not how thou couldst endure the trial  
 If she should needs be gone a year or longer while.

32

"Dismiss thy dreams, and more—dismiss thy fears:  
They are but wind, release them to the breeze:  
'Tis only melancholy which them rears  
To make their victim fear the ills he sees:—  
God only knows what truth in them inheres;  
And all our dreams and all our auguries,  
On which the stupid gaze, amount to naught  
And nothing in the future e'er through them is wrought.

33

"Therefore, have mercy on thyself, pardee;  
This wild and foolish grief consent to leave;—  
Do me such grace, make that one gift to me,  
Arise, thy o'er-anxiety relieve;  
Let us rehearse past things more pleasantly;—  
Dispose thy lofty mind more to receive  
The future good, that soon enough will chance,  
And take such hope and comfort as the Fates advance.

34

"This city Troy is full of all delight,—  
And, mark thee, since the truce now holds effect,  
Thou canst go distant far from here of right  
To any pleasant realm and there select  
A king to be thy host, until the night  
Of thy life's pain is but a retrospect,—  
Until the time thy lady set hath fled,  
That lady fair, for whom thy heart so much hath bled.

35

"Bestir then, prithee;—get thee up, arise;  
It is no valiant act this way to groan,  
Or still to lie down in that shameful guise;  
If all thy different silly acts were known  
Outside, thou wouldst be overwhelmed with lies;  
For men would say the times had made him moan  
So cowardly; 'twas not for love he wept,  
But feigning illness him from battle kept."



36

"Alas! Who loses much must weep his woe;  
I cannot wot if ever man hath known  
How great that good was I have now let go;  
Therefore I should not much be blamed, I own,  
For having wept as man ne'er wept in throe;  
But, since thou wishest it, I'll cease to moan  
And then, as best I can, recomfort me  
To do thee pleasure—in a service meek to thee.

37

"But Heaven speed to me that far tenth day  
Which must again to me such joyaunce bring  
As that I knew ere she was sent away!  
Never was rose as fair in sweet first-spring  
As I shall shape me to be fair and gay,—  
Shape me once more to dance for joy and sing,  
When I shall see, returned here to Troy,  
My lady's wax-white face,—my torment, mine annoy!

38

"But whither for such joyaunce now repair,  
As thou advisest? Were't to Sarpedon,  
How long could I make quiet sojourn there?  
For in my mind will still be question,  
Might not somehow my Criseis hither fare  
Ere the set day through seized occasion?  
And if that hap, I would not be away  
For all the good the world avail or further may."

39

"If she return, I'll see incontinent,"  
Responded Pandar, "word is brought to thee;  
I am, alone, for that full competent  
Since your *amour* is only known to me;  
And in that task none would, perhaps, be bent  
As glad as I, or serve more willingly;  
And I shall not abandon th' emprise;  
Go thou to Sarpedon—and go in festive wise."

40

The comrades two then set them on their way  
And after some four miles of journeying,  
Arrived at Sarpedon's and there made stay;  
Who proved most cordial in his welcoming  
To Troil, and his friend alike, that day;  
And they, though more inclined to sigh than sing,  
With merry cheer and playful-laughing boast,  
Made gay and blithe their mien before their baron-host.

41

The latter, like a man of mighty heart,  
In all more gracious far than any man,  
Showed both great honour in his marvellous art;  
They made great fête or in the chase they ran  
With ladies fair-esteemed, in every part,  
With song and shout—or great feasts he began  
In pomp and regal hospitality,  
Greater than men in Troy before might ever see.

42

But yet what joyed these things sad Troilo,  
Whose heart went not to them, but silent stayed?  
Where his desire had gazed, his thoughts would go  
And of his love they often image made;—  
Then Criseis seemed no highest god below,  
But stood before his mind's eyes bright arrayed;—  
Now one thing, now another, fancy tried;  
But ever and anon for love the young prince sighed.

43

And every other dame 'twas grief to see,  
However she was prized, however she was fair;  
All comfort, every gentle song of glee  
Was pain to him, who saw not Criseis there,  
In whose hands Love had placed the holy key  
Of all his life of fear and fretful care:  
The more they made him cheer, the more he thought  
Of her, and spurned all other things as things of naught.

44

Meantime no morning, no nor evening passed,  
When he called not on Criseis in sighs,  
"O light most fair, and star of dawn stedfast!"  
And then, as though she was before his eyes,  
Listening, a thousand times and more, at last  
He'd call her *rose* and ask a kiss for prize,  
Until he had again to stop pretence  
And end his feignéd greetings in more impotence.

45

And now no hour in the day went by  
When he a thousand times breathed not her name;  
Always upon his lips was that sweet cry;  
In heart and mind he fashioned e'er the same  
Fair face, and all her words adorned and high;—  
And letters, too, that from his lady came  
He turned and read a hundred times a day,  
So much he joyed to see what matter in them lay.

46

And when they had there three long days delayed,  
To Pandaro our Troil gan to sigh:  
"What boots it here? Were we two bound and made  
Only to live here tediously, and die?  
To take our leave must we be so afraid?  
To speak thee sooth, I can no more deny  
My wish t' escape; with Sarpedon we've fared  
Now long enough, and seen his sumptuous cheer  
prepared.

47

And Pandar then: "Have we been treated here  
Aught churlishly, or hath the tenth day sped?  
Our going hence would sure affront appear,—  
Restrain thee more, be more by reason led.  
Where couldst thou go? What other place seek near  
For feasts as rich as these with which we're fed?  
Yet two more days, then, stay we ere we go  
And, after, take us home if still thou wishest so."

48

And Troil, gainst his will, continued there,  
But ever clinging to his wonted thought,  
And all that Pandar urged was lost in air  
Until the fifth day mood for leaving brought;  
When both, though Sarpedon objection bare,  
Departed home; but Troil, still distraught,  
Called much upon the way, "O God of Grace,  
Shall I now find my love returned and see her face?"

49

But Pandar to himself spake otherwise,  
As one who knew the whole of Calchas' bent  
And all his subtle schemes could realize:  
"The youth's wild will and fiery-hot intent  
May well grow cool, unless I ill surmise  
The things I heard ere Criseis from him went;  
Ten days will pass,—nay more,—a month, a year  
Before, methinks, the prince will see his lady here."

50

Soon as they were to Troil's house returned,  
Both sought the prince's room incontinent;  
And, seated there, they both could be discerned  
With still their speech on Criseis wholly bent;  
While in Prince Troil sighs, as ever, burned;  
And, when again they rose and forward went,  
Once more he wailed, "The house, at least, we'll see,  
Though we can nothing else with any certainty."

51

This said, he caught the hand of Pandaro,  
Forced o'er his countenance a feignéd smile,  
Drew from the palace doors his comrade slow;  
And other pretexts used then to beguile  
The friends they met, that he might hide the woe  
That yet he felt of love; but, in short while,  
His eyes caught sight of Criseis' closed abode  
And quick, anew disturbed, his feelings overflowed.

52

He felt his heart had been most rudely split  
When door and window both he saw were closed;  
And, so far was he carried by the sudden fit  
Of sudden pain again on him imposed,  
He knew not how to rise, stand, walk, or sit.  
Then on his face, so late by guile composed,  
A change came, with its signs so manifest  
That any wight who gazed had sure his secret guessed.

53

A while he could not speak for that new grief,  
But presently began to Pandaro:  
"Alas, this place was bright beyond belief  
And joyous, too, when I could come and go  
Finding her beauty here, who let relief  
And all my peace from her fair eyes to flow:  
Now is it grown obscure, sans her, as night,  
And I can never hope to see her in this light."

54

Then off they rode along the Trojan ways,  
Where each spot brought his lady back to mind:  
Whence he went musing much in praise:  
"There once I saw her smiling blithe and kind;  
Here saw her turn and at me sweetly gaze;  
There gentle greeting 'twas my joy to find;  
Here I beheld her feasting, there saw her stand  
In pensive mood, and piteous to my sighs' demand.

55

"'Twas there she stood when first the blessed look  
Of her bright eyes and fair, moved my desire;  
And here, when in a sigh's red flame she took  
My heart from me to burn't in greater fire;  
And there, when she could not now longer brook  
To stay my pleasure—woman-like retire;  
And here I saw her proud; here, lowly-willed,  
My gentle lady showed she was with meekness filled."

56

Then he resumed in reminiscent vein:  
“ ’Tis long, Love, thou’st made reckoning of me,—  
If more I wish not to conceal my pain,  
If truth resides still in my memory;  
Where’er I go or stay, I see them plain—  
The thousand trophies of thy victory;  
And now I know thy triumph over one  
Who’d scorned all lovers, Lord,  
and thee had thought to shun.

57

“Thou hast avengéd well thine injury,  
O mighty lord and worthy pious fear:  
But, since my soul is given all to thee  
And in thy service thou canst see it clear,  
Let it not die so unconsolédly,—  
Restore it to its joyaunce, Majesty;  
Constrain my Criseis, as thou doest me,  
So she return and end my woes and misery.”

58

And in those days he oft approached the gate  
Whence Criseis had gone, and pondered there:  
“ ’Twas hence my comfort issued, driv’n by Fate,  
’Twas hence she went, my life, my love, my fair;  
As far as this I did escort her late,  
And here I parted from her full of care;  
Here, wearily, I pressed her fingers white,  
Here, weeping, held her hand in our last sad delight.

59

“Thou wentest hence, my heart, my being’s fire;  
When shall it be thou canst again return,  
O dear my blessing, sweet my life’s desire?  
In those ten days I can, at least, discern  
A thousand years; must I so long aspire  
To see thee coming back—and yearn and yearn?  
Come, comfort me,—as thou hast pledged thy word,—  
And be thy coming now not one day more deferred!”

60

And, as he thought, his face had grown more pale  
And colourless than e'er its wont had been;  
He fancied now men would each other hail  
And then point at him with their fingers thin,  
Demanding, "Why is Troil grown so frail,  
So stricken sore, so cruelly battered in?"—  
But no man had so pointed, in good sooth:  
He oft suspects such things who in him knows the truth.

61

Wherefore he took resort to poesie  
To tell his woes, and in his verses sighed,  
Weary so long in such deep grief to be,  
And somewhat, thus, his pain he modified;  
So through ill times he waited anxiously,  
Chanting his low-voiced songs, while still he tried  
More to restore his mind, so conqueréd  
By Love's excess of woe; and words like these he said:

62

"The gentle aspect and the soft-sweet mien  
Of the most beauteous eyes e'er made to see,  
Which I have lost now, make my life so lean  
That I must needs go sighing heavily;  
And so far have they led me in my teen  
I lightly sigh no more, and gay and free,  
As I was wont, but only death desire  
Because she's parted hence; so grief doth me inspire."

63

"Alas that Love did not at his first blow  
So strike me that I had that instant died!  
Why, Love, didst thou not part this soul of woe  
That still I own, from weary me?" he cried.  
"Why should I see me fallen now so low?  
Love comforts not the pain by which I'm tried,  
Save by the means of death, since still I find  
I'm parted from the eyes in which Love soft reclined.



64

“When toward my lady fair of late my eyes  
In gentle act of greeting gladly went,  
Their power all was taken by surprise;  
Since when, to weep I cannot them prevent,  
So much Love’s cruel blows do me despise,  
When I recall sweet Criseis from me rent!  
But now she’s far away, and I can cry  
Only my weleday that Love won’t let me die!

65

“Yea, Lord, my plight hath grown so great in woes  
That my eyes only meet what brings them pain;  
O dear Lord Love, let then thy soft hand close  
Eyes that no more shall see Love’s aspect plain;  
And then, great Love, for death my flesh compose!  
Naked it is now, poor—sans will to gain  
Any new boons of life; for Death’s sad blow  
Only can give me life and free my soul to go.

66

“For, freed, my soul will seek that fair embrace  
Where Fortune wills I now no more shall cling  
With arms still glad. See, Love, how on my face  
Death’s seal is set in Death’s own colouring!  
O see how pain my soul would from me chase!  
O see, sweet Love, how easy were the thing  
To take my soul and place’t in Criseis’ breast  
Where peace were surely had—and rest, desired rest!”

67

And, after much he had thus sung and said,  
Back to his former sighs the prince was brought;  
Where’er he went by day, at night in bed,  
’Twas always of his Criseis gone he thought;  
No joy in other things he took nor read,  
But e’er with counting days that passed he wrought,  
Fearing that he should never count to ten  
And see his Criseis from the Greeks come back again.

68

Each day seemed long, and longer yet each night;  
And both grew ever in unwonted mode:  
For from the instant when the dawn flushed white  
He counted seconds till the fixed stars showed  
Clear in the dark; or, while the sun stayed bright,  
He vowed so long, so wide, it never rode  
There in the sky. And in the hours of night  
He counted quite the same until the dawn was white.

69

At Criseis' parting he had seen the moon  
Not altogether full but hornéd quite,  
Riding the sky at morn by some fortune;  
Whence oft he said, remembering that sight:  
"When she returns,—and may that time be soon,—  
With her two horns both new and clear and white,  
As fair she shone when Criseis went away,  
Then shall my soul return and here then with me stay."

70

He saw the Greeks' tents stretched outside of Troy,  
And, though much formerly that martial sight  
Had him disturbed and filled him with annoy,  
His gazing now was tempered with delight;  
And he would fancy with a lonesome joy,  
Whene'er the soft winds touched his face aright,  
They came as Criseis' sighs, and then would say  
Or here or there his charming lady now did stray.

71

In such a wise, or even ways more vain,  
He sought to while the weary hours away;  
And Pandaro, to soothe his Troil's pain,  
Always would reason with him, blithe and gay,  
Leaving untried no alley of his brain,  
Whence he might find a means good cheer to say,—  
Giving his Troil hope and esperance  
Of some shrewd means which Criseis must find perchance.

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## CANTO SIX

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I

OUTSIDE the walls, down on the broad seacoast,  
Dwelt Criseis now, a few maids at her side;  
And there, amid the Greeks' great arméd host,  
She spent her nights in tears she needs must hide,  
For in the day she had to check them most;  
Wherefore her cheeks, once fresh and rosy-dyed,  
Grew both most meager-pale and thin to see—  
Far from her love, far from her heart's  
sweet certainty.

2

She wept and murmured much in reverie  
Of Troil, now, it seemed, a lost delight,  
And all their acts she cast in memory  
And went recording all their words aright,  
Prizing his vows and hers in all entirety,  
Whenever time she had and power and might:  
Whence, knowing her so far from joy and him,  
She made her eyes a fountain bitter to the brim.

3

And no one could have been so hard of soul  
Who, if he heard her weep in that torment,  
He had not of his own tears lost control,  
So bitterly she wept in her lament  
Whenever time gave her one moment's dole;  
And, though no one could write her woe's extent,  
Criseis had grief much harder yet to bear—  
She had no cousin near who might her sorrows share!

4

She gazed in sorrow on the walls of Troy,  
On palace, tower, mighty fortresses,  
And inward cried: "What measures, there, of joy!  
What sweets of love and all its riches,  
Alas, were mine! But now in sad annoy  
I waste my charms to sombre palenesses.  
Alas, my Troilo, how fares it thee?  
Dost thou still hold thy Criseis in true memory?"

5

"Ah me, alas! Had I thee but believed,  
Had we twain but together lately fled,  
And in what kingdom pleased thee been received!  
Then had I on such dolour never fed  
As now I feel, nor such lost time perceived  
When Fate shall grant I back to thee be led!  
And none would e'er have spoken ill of me  
Because, with such a man, I once had chose to flee.

6

"Ah me, alas! that realize so slow  
How my own bosom turns my enemy!  
I'd flee one ill, to follow worser woe—  
Beggar my heart still more in penury,  
Hoping that joy might follow death's fell blow!  
Alas, dear Troil whom no more I see  
(And fear I ne'er shall see!), I wish in vain,  
Wishing the Greeks would leave this Trojan plain.

7

"Yet I shall try my best from them to flee,  
If Fate will not another means bestow  
Of going back to Troy to be with thee,  
As I have promised: for the smoke doth go  
Where the smoke lists, and so 'twill prove with me,  
For what would follow me must follow slow.  
Yea, though I die of grief, I still will say,  
No wight can stop me now—and no wight bar my way."

## 8

But from such lofty-pure and high intent  
Another lover soon had turned the dame;  
For Diomed plied every argument  
And quite to win her heart he made his game;  
Nor did it fail him long, that hoped event,  
For soon he drave her mind from Troil's name,  
From thoughts of Troy,—from every other dream,  
False love or true, whatever love might to her seem.

## 9

The fourth full day was not yet onward hied  
Since she had parted in her bitter woe,  
When Diomed an honest means espied  
To come and find her lonely, sobbing low,  
Transformed from when he rode at her fair side  
The day when Fate from Troy had made her go;  
The day when he had brought her thence to here;  
And this to him did marvel more than great appear.

## 10

And to himself he said at that first view:  
"Vain will my efforts be, I must believe;  
'Tis for some other's love she feels this rue,  
For some man else I see her sigh and grieve;  
And I with sov'reign art must me indue  
If I would win her that man's love to leave  
And take up mine. Oh evil was the day  
When this sweet Criseis from Troy I led away!"

## 11

But like a man of ardour great possessed,  
And of great heart, he firm resolved in mind  
(Though death itself should prove his sure behest),  
Since he was come, he would a method find  
To show her how he was with love oppressed,  
What pains he'd suffer till she proved more kind;  
Then, agilely, the Greek knight took his seat,  
Resolved, though 'twere at length,  
    he would achieve the feat.

12

And first, then, in his talk he spake amain  
Of that hard war by Greeks and Trojans fought,  
Demanding if she deemed its purpose vain—  
(If winning it was but a frivolous thought!)  
Ventured so far in words that were more plain  
To ask if Greek ways seemed in strangeness wrought—  
Only refrained from asking her forthright  
Why Calchas did not wed her to some Grecian knight.

13

But Criseis, whose mind was still on Troil bent,  
On him who had appeared such lover sweet,  
Saw naught of Diomed's astute intent;  
But, since great Amor held the answer meet,  
Amor, who ruled the day, she answer lent,  
And oftentimes to him her heart would fleet  
In pitying mood,—and, thus, much hope she gave  
To Diomed of that he sought so ardent-brave.

14

Then, of his speech assured and bolder grown,  
“Fair lady, blithe and young,” he gan to say,  
“If well I saw, then none hath ever known,  
Even in angel's face, a look more gay,—  
A visage that with greater pleasaunce shone,—  
Than yours the day we drew from Troy away  
And did, as well you know, then hither come;  
But now I see your look transformed—in martyrdom!

15

“Nor do I know what can thereof be cause  
If 'tis not love, the which, if you are wise,  
You'll cast away, obeying reason's laws;  
Therefore, as now I speak, act in that guise;  
Methinks doom on the Trojans nearer draws,  
Held now our prisoners in war's hard vise;  
And we, to raise our siege, have no desire  
Until it mean we sack Troy Town with sword and fire.

16

“For do not think that any wight in Troy  
Shall find Greek then to treat him pityingly:  
Never was Greek who folly did employ,  
And never, though the world should last eternally  
Will Greek refuse his just right to destroy  
The friends of Paris’ mad iniquity.—  
Yea, if we can, we’ll give such punishment  
As Paris’ deed requires—though all of Troy be shent.

17

“If twelve Hectors instead of one, were there  
And sixty brothers each as brave as he  
(If Calchas doth us not with errors snare  
Or ply his tricks for us unequally),  
Though high prized are the honours now they bear,  
Soon shall we make them ours, with death the fee  
That soon these things will chance, you may be sure;  
For not false is our hope, but true and high and pure.

18

“Believe not Calchas had demanded you  
With half the great persistence that he showed,  
Had he not known the things I say are true;  
I talked it with him in his own abode  
Before he brought that wish to common view,  
And I saw deep the cause that in it rode,—  
Why he would bring you from your perils great,  
Why so he counseled him ere it should prove too late.

19

“And him as I consoled, of you I learned,—  
Your marvelous virtue and your every grace:  
When, feeling Antenor might be returned,  
I offered me as agent in the case;  
And Calchas, since my faith he well discerned,  
Left me the task, which I performed apace,  
Going and coming ever tirelessly  
In speech and conference, and holding audience free.



20

"Wherefore I bid you, lady fair and dear,  
To cast all Trojans' bootless love aside;  
Expel whatever bitter hope draws near;  
Observe your sighs how vainly they are sighed;  
Recall, and let your beauty shine out clear,  
Which pleases well whoever has't espied;  
For now such fate is closely come to Troy  
As must her warriors' hopes in full destroy.

21

"And e'en if Troy should always stand secure,  
Hers is a race of barbarous, uncouth men,  
Her king, his sons, her citizens, impure,  
And nothing like the Greeks in might or ken,  
Who well surpass all men in prowess sure,  
In customs high and honours, twice again;  
Here shall you dwell mid men of courtesy;  
There ye abode midst gross and dull brutality.

22

"Suppose not love as high and perfect-great  
Is not found here with us, as there in Troy;  
Your own high worth, your beauteous estate,  
Your face angelic, aspect sweet and coy,  
Will find a worthy lover here not late;  
And, should it not displease you, I would be,  
More than a king in Greece, that lover willingly."

23

This said, his face did all vermilion grow,  
Red as a fire; and sudden he him checked;  
Trembling, his eyelids toward the earth dropped low  
And suffered not his eyes to gaze direct.  
Then counsel smote on him, as 'twere a blow,  
And quick he spake again to this effect;  
"Fair lady, do not deem this great annoy,  
I am as gentle-born as any man in Troy.

24

"Were Tydeus, my sire, alive to-day,  
Who died with them that gainst Thebes nobly fought,  
Argo and Calydon would know his sway  
As king; and to be king there is my thought.  
For no usurper there, he made his way,  
But native-born, revered, with ancient honours fraught,  
And, sooth to say, sprung from high deity;  
So that I am not held, mid Greeks, of low degree.

25

"Wherefore I pray, if aught my prayer can do,  
You drive away all black-browed listlessness,  
And take me as a servant unto you  
If aught I seem to fit your worthiness  
In my deserts; and I shall serve most true  
Whate'er your honour ask,—or graciousness,—  
For ne'er in wight did both so much appear,—  
If you poor Diomed will only hold more dear!"

26

Criseis listened long; then modestly,  
Her words both slow and few, made answering  
To what his many words had asked should be;  
And, hearing what he said as latest thing,  
She told herself she could great ardour see,—  
Yet saw it vile and not worth treasuring  
So firm did love for Troil yet endure.  
At last she spake submissive, but in accents sure:

27

"I love much, Diomed, the land of Troy,  
Where I was born and more than kindly bred;  
So heavy on me weighs this war's annoy,  
And glad I'd see my home deliveréd;  
Since Fate forbids me there my life enjoy,  
I feel I am, with reason, sore bestead;  
But for each service that thou rend'rest me  
I pray deserved reward be measured full to thee.

28

The Greeks, I know, are of a noble race  
And gentle breeding as thou dost assure;  
But Trojan worth holds, therefore, no less place  
Of honour—being quite as high and pure,  
For oft hath Trojan valour shown its face  
In Hector's deeds. Oh no, I'll not endure  
A thought of praising Greece through blaming Troy;  
So to compare the two could give me little joy!

29

"And love I have not known, since late he died,  
My husband, whom I served most loyally  
Ever as lord and master worth my pride;  
And never could I in so high degree  
Love Greek or Trojan, though full oft he sighed,  
For love's desire abides no more in me;  
That thou art sprung of lofty royal blood,  
I well believe and I have clearly understood.

30

"And that truth, with thy spirit high and great,  
Moves admiration in a wight like me,  
Born to a lowlier, far more humble, state;  
While born more royal should thy consort be  
And fair as Helen; I am desolate—  
Too ill at heart to have such news of thee;  
But this I do not say because I grieve  
That now so clear confessed thy love I should perceive.

31

"The times are ill, and still in arms ye fight,—  
Let nearer come the victory thou dost wait,  
Then shall I better know what is my might;  
Then less than now, perhaps, I'll find I hate  
Pleasure—and then, perchance, some new delight  
May spring in me, and what thou dost relate  
Will grow more dear: a man must watch, 'tis said,  
Time and the season if he would him wisely wed."

32

Quite dear her last words were to Diomed,  
Who cheerly thought he now could hope more sure  
And see, sans fail, reward from hope proceed,—  
Some boon of pleasure that would long endure;  
And so he answered: "Lady, to thy need  
I pledge my greatest faith, my ardour pure;  
At thy disposing am I, and shall be."  
No more he said but went thereafter, instantly.

33

In figure he was tall, and fair of mien,  
A fresh youth well endowed with pleasing grace,—  
Proud, too, and brave, as in his speech was seen,—  
As affable as all of Grecian race,—  
And prone to love by nature, one would ween:  
Which things fair Criseis' mind began to trace,  
Once he was gone, much doubting which was meet:  
Should she respond to it or flee from love so sweet?

34

And these things chilled in her that keen desire  
Which she had felt so promptly to return;  
They fixed them deep and bent her mind entire,  
Where late her love for Troil bright did burn;  
Then back inclined the flames of that great fire  
Till torment vanished as new hope did yearn:  
At last, it chanced, these things did so persuade  
She broke her faith, and Troilo unkindly she betrayed.



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## CANTO SEVEN

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**B**UT Troil passed the time, as hath been said,  
Waiting in vain the tenth and promised day,  
Which for his waiting was no earlier bred.  
At last it came; when, feigning some new play,  
Toward the gate he unattended sped—  
Save for his Pandar—talking all the way;  
And, gazing tow'rd the fields, the two moved coy  
To see if any wight was coming back to Troy.

2  
When ladies came, attended or alone,  
It seemed each must be Criseis coming back,  
Till, on approach, she proved some fair unknown  
Who walked on openly sans haste or slack:  
So stood they, till the midday sun had shone  
And turned across the heavens on his track;  
And oft they smiled at their credulity—  
“As if experience showed things ever thus could be!”

3  
And Troil said: “Of course, she would not start  
Before she'd eaten dinner with her sire;  
For she would have to use her subtlest art  
To leave at all against his fond desire.  
Yea, she had found a means from him to part  
Had she not stayed to eat beside his fire!  
Speak, then, what wilt thou say of my surmise?  
She tried her wits in vain—old Calchas was too wise!”

4

And Pandar answered: "Thou dost truly say.  
Go we a while and later we'll come here  
Again." And finally they took their way,  
Troil agreeing, as it would appear.  
Then, though the time ere nones upon that day  
Had seemed most long, they felt with inward fear  
They'd not stood long enough, and stopped again,  
Looking for her that came no way across the plain.

5

And Troil said: "Her sire doth her oppose,  
Perhaps, and on tow'rd eve would her delay.  
'Tis therefore her return so tardy grows;  
Come, let us stand outside there on the way  
So that the guards, who always look too close,  
Shall not much hinder her return to-day,  
For they are wont to parley endlessly  
Sans thought to whom such treatment comes  
appropriately."

6

And vespers came and darker evening came,  
And each hour crept on, mocking Troilo,  
Who, eyes bent on the fields, stood e'er the same,  
Regarding all that moved there to and fro  
Approaching Troy, and (Never-ending game!)  
Of each who came that way he sought to know  
What new things chanced among the Greeks of late;  
But naught he gleaned from all he asked importunate.

7

Then, turned to Pandaro, he made surmise:  
"If in her methods well and true I see,  
My lady once again hath acted wise;  
She wishes to return in secrecy,  
Therefore waits night, when all in darkness lies;  
And I commend her that too curiously  
She'll not have people gaze and idly sneer:  
'For Antenor exchanged, and now returnéd here?'



## 8

"Nay, do not weary that so long we wait,  
For God's sweet sake, my Pandar, I emlore!  
We have naught else t' employ our idle state;  
Granting my wish can grieve thee nothing sore.  
Oh there methinks I see her coming late!  
Look thou! Yea, we are seeing her once more!"  
"No," answered Pandar, "if my eyes see clear  
Thou pointest at a cart which cometh slowly near."

## 9

"Alas, that thou sayst true," sighed Troilo,  
" 'Tis ever thus man's wish doth him deride,—  
And her, as if she came, it clear did show."  
At length the sunlight from the heaven died,  
And, one by one, the stars renewed their glow;  
"It comforts me," then Troil softly cried,  
"To have my gentle thought and wishes pure  
Make me so certain that she'll come ere long for sure."

## 10

But Pandar only then laughed inwardly  
At that he heard Prince Troil raptly say,  
For he, as no one else, could know and see  
The cause that moved the young knight's lips that way;  
But, not to make him more in grief to be  
Than then he was, he made his semblance gay  
And feigned belief, but mused, "The wretched wight  
Awaits some great volcano wind to come to-night."

## 11

They waited still in vain, while at the gate  
The keepers made above a furious din,  
Calling for citizens and strangers late  
And all who entrance wished, to come within,—  
Herdsman and beast and other rabble great;  
But Troil still delayed nor would come in  
Until he saw the whole sky brightly starred,  
When he returned with Pandar, still unbarred.

## 12

And, though full many times that idle day  
With one or other hope he him deceived,  
Ever anon it still was Amour's way  
That in each hope in turn he much believed,  
And none seemed foolish in the whole array:  
Whence he him turned to Pandar, now relieved,  
And once more ventured: "O witless pair  
Of youths, to wait all day her coming up from there!"

## 13

"She said she would ten days with Calchas spend,  
Nor would with her old sire one other stay,  
But back to Troy she would thereafter wend;  
To-day was then to be her last away.  
Not till to-morrow doth her absence end—  
If to count rightly still I know the way!  
We have, want-wits, a whole day lingered here,  
So hath desire forgot what she told me so clear!

## 14

"To-morrow morning we shall here return,  
Pandaro, timely." And they promptly came;  
But, up and down, they could no more discern.  
Her thought was fixed now on another's name;  
So that their idling did them nothing learn,  
And that day proved as yesterday the same;  
Night came, and both withdrew them into Troy,  
Whence Troilo was filled with bitterest annoy.

## 15

And the glad hope he once had stoutly owned  
Now had no place itself to fasten sure;  
So, once again, the heart within him moaned,  
As he commenced complaint that none could cure  
Of her and Love, and, as his spirit groaned,  
He felt in no sense could excuse be pure  
For her delay,—return, she said she would,  
And she had pledged her faith in goodly womanhood!

## 16

The third, the fourth, the fifth, the sixth day passed  
After the ten already fled away,—  
With Troil hopeful now, now sad downcast,—  
But ever sighing through each bitter day:  
And yet more time, when these were gone at last,  
Hope kept in him an ever changing sway.  
But all in vain! She never did return,  
Wherefore the prince's heart must burn, and ache,  
and burn.

## 17

His tears, that had been lately much relieved  
Through Pandar's comforting, and all his sighs  
Came back uncalled for, while his spirit grieved  
In an increasing hot and furious wise.  
All of the hopes he had till then reprieved  
And saved, died cruelly as martyr dies  
(For, mocked in him, they found them tortured more  
Than ever hopes had been), and fled the winds before.

## 18

In him all old desire returned anew,  
No longer checked; and o'er him the deceit  
It seemed he now saw true,—the hostile rue  
Whose spirit holds in jealousy its seat,—  
Weighed heavier than erst he ever knew,  
Till, beggared of repose, he felt defeat,  
More than all men to jealousy a prey;  
And, as his eyes allowed, he wept both night and day.

## 19

Eating or drinking was no pleasure now  
So full of anguish did he feel his breast;  
And more, his conquering sighs would not allow  
Sleep to approach his eyes; yea, sore distressed,  
His life and self beneath his griefs did bow;  
And then, like fire, fled all delight and rest.  
And so, with might and main, the prince did flee  
All festival and every jocund company.

20

And his pale face was grown so agonized,  
He seemed less man than some poor wounded beast;  
And no man could him well have recognized,  
For wax-like pale he was—like one deceased.  
All valour left his body as despised,  
And in his members force dwelt now the least  
That could beat up at all; and still he spurned  
All comfort that to give him friend and kinsman yearned.

21

Priam, who saw his face so sad dismayed,  
Called the prince often closely to his side  
Asking, "What grief, my Troil, so hath weighed  
On thee? Speak, that some cure may be applied.  
Thou'rt not thyself—thy cheeks too wanly fade;  
What makes thee look so ill, so mortified?  
Speak out, my son, thou hidest some deep woe,  
And too well do we see how weak thy cheer doth grow.

22

And Hector spake to him no otherwise;  
Paris; his brothers, and his sisters too;  
And all demanded whence should so arise  
The grief he had and through what evils new.  
But back to all he gave the same replies,—  
His heart was ill, he felt strange forms of rue,  
But, what these all were urgent questioning,  
Could never from his lips more freely learn to bring.

23

And then one day, now melancholic all  
Over her broken faith, our Troilo  
Slept and saw in his dream the perilous fall  
Of her who made him languish so in woe.—  
He chanced upon a wood all dark and tall  
And, sudden, heard a smashing, blow on blow,  
When, as he raised his eyes, he seemed to spy  
A furious tuskéd boar go crashing wildly by.

24

Then, stopped at that boar's feet, he seemed to see  
Criseis prostrate, while his muzzle tore  
Her heart from out her side; and, quietly  
And pleased, it seemed, that wickedness she bore,  
Careless the beast should be so wanton-free,  
Nor prone at all his actions to deplore:  
And at that sight the prince felt pain so deep  
It touched his heavy eyes and brake his devilish sleep.

25

Then, more aroused, he gan to think quite clear  
Of all the things he'd seen in that ill dream:  
"Surely," he thought, "this vision did appear  
Wishing to prove what ere this could but seem!"  
Whereon he sent for Pandar in his fear,  
Feeling once more his need was grown extreme;  
And, as he came, he called "My Pandaro,  
The high gods do not love me; I am prince of woe.

26

"In thy fair cousin I was much deceived,  
Though all my faith I did in her repose;  
For now some other's love she hath received,  
Which pains me more than twenty mortal woes:  
And this I have both true and well perceived,  
For now the gods through dreams the truth disclose."  
Then Troil told him all the dream had shown,  
And thus, explaining all, he spoke twixt moan and moan:

27

"The boar I saw is Diomed parfay,  
Whose grandsire 'twas that slew the beast of yore  
In Calydon, if what our ancients say  
Can be believed; since when his children bore  
As proper arms, just as we see to-day,—  
The great beast's image. 'Tis bitter-sore  
And true, I dreamed! The knight hath won her heart  
And stolen all her love through his fair-spoken art.

28

"He holds her back, he makes my life's grief burn,  
As, ere long, I shall see all openly;  
'Tis he alone that hinders her return,  
Which, were he not, could be immediately;  
She is not checked by Calchas, old and stern,  
Nor stopped by other care, quite well I see;  
So am I mocked; so, gross deceived;  
Laughed at and scorned, who waited and  
in vain believed.

29

"Alas, my Criseis, say what beauty vain,  
What subtle genius, what new pleasuring,  
What wrath toward me,—or more, what just disdain,—  
What sin of mine, what proud or what strange thing  
Did so thy lofty soul and virtues plain  
Now to another's standard trait'rous bring?  
Alas for strength, for pledge, for loyalty,  
Who hath so caught them all, my love, away from thee?

30

"Alas, why did I let thee freely go?  
Why trusted I thy scheming and thy rede?  
Alas, why to my wish did I say no,  
When I desired thee far away to lead?  
Why broke I not the pact with one strong blow,  
As urged my heart, and for thee intercede  
When I beheld th' exchange? Thou hadst been, then  
Never disloyal-false, nor I the least of men!

31

"I trusted thee and hoped thy faith was sure,  
A wholesome pledge and, in its honour, bright,  
While in thy words I felt the truth was pure  
And sure as mortals find the sun's broad light;  
But all thou saidst was covert,—hid, obscure,—  
As now, in tales of thee, I see aright;  
Nor hast thou only failed to back return,—  
Love in thee for another now doth wicked burn.

32

"What shall I, Pandaro? Since in my mind  
I feel the fire's rekindled blasting breath  
Such that my thought for it no place can find:  
With mine own hands I long to seize on death,  
For to my life cheer will no more be kind,  
Since Fortune her so hostile rendereth  
To bring such evil fate; death were delight,  
And living will be but annoy and sore despite."

33

He spake and tow'rd a dagger sudden turned,  
Which hung there in his room, all sharp and clean;  
For much to slay himself therewith he yearned  
By thrusting in his breast that blade so keen;  
But Pandar seized him, for he well discerned  
The desperate act the witless youth did mean,  
And he had marked the frantic words he used,  
With deep-breathed sighs and tears now  
wholly interfused.

34

Yet Troil moaned: "O hold me not, my friend,  
Release me, thou, for God's sweet sake, I pray!  
If I am so disposed to haste my end,  
Then let my wild desire have all its way;  
Release me, naught thou canst my purpose bend,—  
For this is death to which I run to-day;  
Release me, Pandar,—by Heaven's name  
I swear, if unreleased, I'll slay me just the same.

35

"O let me from this world my body free,  
Which lives too sad: O let me somehow die.  
That my false lady may contented be,  
That lady who will follow by and by  
To the black realm of shades and grief and dree:  
O let me slay me; in this life I spy  
Things worse than death." He spake and  
grasped the blade,  
Which Pandar still held back, by all these acts dismayed.



36

And then between them was a wrestling great,  
With loud uproar, while Pandar held him tight;  
And, had not Troil been more weak of late,  
His friend's high valour had been vanquished quite,  
So Troil tossed him round in his mad hate;  
But, in the end, with hard-exerted might  
Pandaro wrenched the prince's sword away,  
Made him sit down—to weep and all his wrath allay.

37

And, after some lament, toward him he turned  
And spake in words so piteous-sad as these:  
“Troil, in thee toward me I have discerned  
Such honest faith that, should I ever please  
To dare to ask thou slay thyself unearned  
For me or other, thou wouldst gladly seize  
On death and, sans delay, commit the deed,—  
As I would glad for thee to mine own death proceed.

38

“Yet thou, despite my prayers, wilt not consent  
Bravely away from hateful death to fly;  
For, had not greater strength to me been lent  
Just now than thine, I should have seen thee die;  
Thy vows I had not thought so little meant;  
I had not thought to see thee fail and lie;  
Although thy words may still amended be,  
If thou wilt but observe my speech effectively.

39

“So far as I can note, thou now dost ween  
That Criseis hath to Diomede turned;  
And, if from what thou saidst I right did glean,  
Thou hast from nothing else this new fear learned  
Than a mere dream, which only so doth mean  
Because in it a boar was clear discerned;  
And, then, sans wishing more the truth to know,  
Thou'ldst end, through death, the gloomy plaints  
that irk thee so.

40

" 'Tis folly, I have often said to thee,  
To think on dreams or on their shows rely;  
None ever was, or is, or e'er will be  
That can its truth securely signify,  
For, when one sleeps, then idly fantasy  
Doth only changing forms to one descry,  
And many, who on one thing full believed,  
Have, after, only opposites to hap perceived.

41

"So in this case all things may issue well,  
This omen thou hast seen—this very beast,  
Though thou art sure he did with malice swell,  
Hath come to show no evil in the least  
But more that, through his actions, he might tell  
Something of use to thee—as might a priest.  
What can it profit, then, to slay thee now  
O Prince? or make to love and moaning one more vow?

42

"The thing was to be scanned quite differently  
From the quick way thou didst it vainly view;  
First it had wished that, with all pow'r in thee,  
Thou closely look and know if it were true;  
And, if it proved to be but falsity,  
Nor safely founded,—then 'twere only due  
Thou shake off faith in dreams and all deceit  
Which pointed to thy loss, thy pain and woe complete.

43

"And if the thing proved tristful verity,  
Thou wert of Criseis deserted quite,  
Yet in thy thoughts to plan deliberately  
For only death were ill in Heaven's sight  
And wrong for thee; for, sooth, I cannot see,  
Who would not blame that act as far from right;  
Nay, if more truly resolute thou'ldst be,  
'Twere fit to scorn her, then, as she had scornéd thee.

44

"If but with death thy grave thoughts do them please,  
Urging thou'lt feel, thereby, of grief less fire,  
The way thou soughtest was not one to seize;  
Another means should furnish thy desire—  
Surely thy thoughts have told thee that release  
Were thine beyond Troy's gates, where Greeks stand dire,  
Ready to slay thee with a keen delight,  
Nor pause to beg thy pardon for a valorous fight.

45

"When thou wilt die, we'll go together, then;  
Armed and against all Greece, we'll fight that day,  
Like valiant youths and prized, selected men,  
Who die avengéd in a virile way;  
Nay, I will never hold thee back again,  
Will not myself avoid, but seek to slay  
Greek upon Greek. Yea, friend, I do descry  
What a just cause moves now thy wish to fight and die."

46

Troil a long time shook in wrath deep-stirred,  
But listened as he could, though much in pain;  
And, after long he had Pandaro heard,  
He fell to tears and, grieving, wept again,  
Turned tow'rd his friend, who, eager, caught each word  
To see if folly now he would disdain  
Or change his mad emprise. And in this guise  
He spoke in tears and oft he broke his speech with sighs:

47

"Pandar, thou canst of this be ever sure,—  
Thine am I with all might of heart and soul,  
And thine in life or death I will endure,  
Life hard or soft! And if, when fury stole,  
Lately of me, all wit and mind mature,  
Thou heldst me back with stern and rough control,  
Thy act was one that first my health desired;  
And so thy valour must be of me much admired.

48

" 'Twas, in my dream too sudden-felt belief  
That moved me late tow'rd such an error dire;  
Now, tortured less, I see with open grief  
My great mistake and my more mad desire;  
But, if thou see't, by Heaven tell me brief  
How, through what means—I may the truth inquire  
Of my suspicions? Tell me that, I pray,  
For I am so disturbed I yet can see no way."

49

And Pandar answered him: "It seems to me  
We might, with letters writ, the lady try;  
Because, if now she hath no love for thee,  
I do not think we can expect reply,  
Or, if she answers, we can clearly see,  
From what she writes, if all thy hopes must die,—  
Or still in her return thou mayst believe,—  
Or if another's love she now doth glad receive.

50

"Since ye two parted, thou hast never wrote  
Nor she writ back to thee. In such a case  
She might perhaps hold (and thee justly quote!)  
She had done well, awaiting time and place.  
And surely were that so, 'twere best thy note  
Chide her indifference—not that she is base  
And otherwise offending. Go thou and write;  
Seeking and doing well must bring the truth to light!"

51

And now so of himself he wearied Troilo  
The prince believed him more than willingly,  
And, drawn apart, he ordered some one go  
And fetch him things to write,—and speedily.  
That done, he fell to thinking safe and slow  
How he should write, and then not terribly,  
But calm—yet sans delay—the knight began  
A letter to his lady that thus sober ran:

52

“O damsel sweet, to whom Love gave me late  
And whose he keeps me now, and long shall keep,—  
E’en all my life,—with faith inviolate,  
Since at thy parting thou didst make it weep  
In greater misery than wight can state,  
My soul, still bruised with its wounds so deep,  
Would recommend it to thy courtesy;  
And other greeting now it cannot send to thee.

53

“Surely thou canst not now have turned so Greek  
Thou wilt my letters wantonly refuse,  
Or chide because it is of love they speak;  
For from sweet memories, howe’er one choose,  
Love cannot die—nor can those chains grow weak  
Which held our love conjoined. We must not lose  
Either those chains or love. So take, I pray,  
These words that I have writ, and read thou all I say.

54

“If servant of his lord might e’er complain,  
I should, I feel, have cause for chiding thee  
And that I might, in fairness, show my pain  
When I regard the pledge thou gavest to me,—  
Thy pious passion, promises again,  
Thy oaths, sworn me by every deity,  
Thou wouldst return in ten days’ little space;—  
Forty of them have passed since I beheld thy face.

55

“Yet, since it seems that I should be content  
With that that pleases thee, I dare not chide;  
But, humbly as I can, ’tis mine intent  
To write my thoughts no less by Love’s fire tried;  
To say my love is still upon thee bent,  
As is my life; and wish I cannot hide—  
To know what is thy life’s experience  
Since thou dost dwell, exchanged, amid the Grecian tents!

56

"Methinks, if now I do remember well,  
Thy father's lies have had some pow'r with thee,  
Or in thy soul new-entered love doth dwell;  
Or yet mayhap,—a thing we seldom see,—  
The old man is grown kind, and so it fell  
Thou wert beholden to his courtesy;  
'Tis thence thy inward purposes do show  
All contrary, and bring us all lament and woe.

57

"So much beyond our compact thou hast stayed  
Surely thou shouldst be thinking of return  
To keep with faith the promise thou hast made!  
Were't still the first or third day, I'd discern  
It meant but this: I must still undismayed  
Wait as I've waited and of patience learn!  
Hadst thou wished only that, I know for sure  
Thou'dst seen how patiently thy Troil can endure.

58

"But now some new-had lover much I fear  
Provides occasion for thy long delay;  
Who, if he do, then greater dolour here  
Is mine to feel than e'er I felt or may;  
And if my fervour merits grief so dear,  
'Tis only thine to know it, or to say:  
Yet thought thereof so makes me live in dread  
That joy and hope are robbed of me and wholly fled.

59

"This dread still makes me groan in hopeless ways,—  
Despondent all, when I would quiet be;  
This dread alone still conqu'ring on me preys,—  
Deep in my thoughts,—and it I cannot flee;  
This dread, alas, still haunts me, still me slays,  
Nor from it can I ever succour me;  
This dread hath brought me in such sad duress  
I'm of no use to Venus—and to Mars still less.

60

"My grieving eyes have never ceased to weep  
Since thou didst thy departure weary take;  
All power to eat, to drink, to rest, to sleep  
Is gone; and, speaking, all my words do break  
Into sighs only; from my lips can leap  
Only the sounds that name thee for my sake—  
Sounds that to thee and Love for comfort call;  
And they alone, methinks, have saved my life at all.

61

"Well canst thou image, then, the thing I'd do  
If I were sure of that which much I fear:  
Certain, I trust, I'd slay me in my rue  
If ever I should see thy failure clear;  
To what end, then, shall I life still pursue,  
Once I have lost the hope, so fond and dear,  
Of having thee, my soul, of whom I wait  
My peace while I shall live—but wait in tearful state?

62

"Sweet song or dalliance with some blithe brigade,  
The falcons, dogs, and all festivity,  
Bright ladies, temples, all the gay parade,  
Which I, of yore, was wont with joy to see,—  
All these I shun, like snares in deep hate laid,  
Whenever that sad thought comes back to me,  
That thou art still so far away from here,  
O sweet my life, my hope, and aye my sov'reign dear!

63

"The painted flowers and the verdure new  
Which colour now the meads a thousand ways,  
Cannot recall my soul from its sad rue,  
So much for thee, my lady, burn Love's rays;  
Only that coign of sky delights my view  
'Neath which I think my Criseis dwells and stays;  
Always to that coign do I look to cry:  
'She sees it, too,—she now, in whom my hope doth lie.'



64

"I gaze out on the hills that round thee close,  
Down on the place that keeps thee hid from me,  
And sigh and sigh: 'Alas, 'tis that and those  
Are privileged her love-lit face to see,  
And her fair eyes, for which my longing grows,  
Afar from them, a life of misery.'  
O were I just that hill—or on that hill!  
O that I dwelt where I might see her still!

65

"I gaze upon the streams bound for the sea,  
To which my Criseis hath her dwelling near,  
And say: 'These streams go where they can her see,  
Go there, where they are seen of her, my dear,  
In whom my own eyes' light hath gone to be,  
Knowing it shines in her divinely clear;  
Alas my life, why cannot streams and I  
Change power to flow on there beneath sweet Criseis' eye?"

66

"And, when the sun sets, enviously I gaze,  
Because, methinks, he yearns for my delight,  
Drawn on toward thee in amorous amaze,  
And so, more soon than wont, to seek thy sight  
He hastens on; and then I hate his ways;  
I sigh; my pains increase; I pray that night  
Descend to earth and thereby rescue thee,  
Lest the broad sun I fear, should steal thee  
thence from me.

67

"And oft to hear some one the place but name,  
Where thou dost dwell,—or oft a man to see  
Who comes from there,—relights in me the flame  
That had seemed growing weak for grief of thee;  
And then, methinks, I feel a hidden game  
Of pleasure in my mind grow cheerily,  
And I cry out: 'O might I come but there  
Whence this man comes, and see my heart's delight  
so fair!"

68

“But thou, how dost thou mid those arméd knights?  
Mid warlike men, mid rumours, neath their tents,  
Amid great ambuscades and sundry frights?  
Art thou not dazed by fury so intense?  
By sounds of arms, by sea-storms in the nights,  
To which thou dwellest so near, sans all defense?  
Are these not cause, my love, of grave annoy?—  
For thou wert wont to live more delicate in Troy!

69

“But true compassion I still have for thee,—  
Greater than for myself,—as true I ought.  
Return therefore; redeem thy pledge to me  
Before I fall into more evil thought:  
I pardon gladly, too, the injury  
Thy too, too long delay hath on me brought;  
Amends I ask none,—save to see thine eyes,  
Thy beauteous face, where only dwells my paradise!

70

“I pray thee by that sov'reign high delight  
Which thou of me, and I of thee did take,  
And, thereto, by thy sweetness fair and bright,  
Which flamed our hearts alike for dear Love's sake;  
And then, my lady, by the beauty white,  
Which thou dost courteous own, my prayer I make:  
By those long sighs, that piteous lament  
In which our mutual breath one time so much was spent.

71

“By kisses sweet and by the glad embrace  
Which drew our hearts together, close and tight;  
By all the joyaunce and the talk in grace,  
Which ever made more blithe our high delight;  
By that faith, too, it pleased thee so to place  
In all the words of love thou didst recite,  
When last we met (and parted sadly then—  
And have not, ever since, the other met again!)

72

"I pray thee, so recall and here return:  
And, if perchance some cause prohibits thee,  
Then write who, after thy ten day sojourn,  
Still holds thee there from coming back to me.  
O be not in thy fair speech harsh and stern;  
In this, at least, content my life of dree;  
And say if I may henceforth hope to have  
Any sweet love of thee before I seek my grave.

73

"Give me but hope, and I will wait and pray,  
Though that is ever more than misery;  
Deny me hope, and I myself will slay,  
And end this life so bitter-hard for me:—  
Then still, whatever loss befall me may,  
The shame is thine and evermore will be,  
That thou didst do to death a servant true,  
Who ne'er had done thee ill nor giv'n thee cause of rue.

74

"Pardon, if now I do not well endite  
But fail in speech, or if here stain on stain  
Thou find in this sad letter that I write;  
For both offences spring from out my pain,  
Because I live and dwell in sore despite,  
And nothing me from weeping can restrain;  
And all these stains that o'er my letter spread  
Are tears, all tears in grief and tristful dolour shed.

75

"I'll say no more, though much remains to say,  
Until I see thee coming back to me;  
Then act, my soul! Thou canst do much to-day  
If, as thou couldst, thou wouldest labour thee.  
Alas, so am I changed by grief's hard sway  
Thou wilt not know me henceforth for my dree;  
I'll say no more, save 'God thee save, my sweet';  
And God soon grant that thou and I once more  
may meet."

76

He sealed and gave his words to Pandaro,  
Who sent them her. And then whole days in vain  
The prince awaited answer to his woe.  
His dolour grew to more than human pain;  
And everything did confirmation show  
Of that dim forecast of his dream insane;  
But not, therefore, did he all hoping cease,  
For yet to love his Criseis did young Troil please.

77

But still from day to day his dolour grew,  
Hope failing more, and so, as needs must be,  
He one day took to bed, nor more could do,  
When Deifebo, coming him to see,—  
Whom much he loved,—chanced there the youth to view;  
Who, not remarking him gan presently  
To cry one name, "O Criseis," o'er and o'er,  
"O lady, do not let me die in grief so sore!"

78

Deifebo then knew what caused his woe,  
But, quite as if he had not heard the cry,  
Called "Brother,"—and he made a merry show,—  
"Canst thou no comfort for thy poor soul spy?  
The season gay, and more than fair, doth grow,  
The meadows broadly green in beauty lie,  
Their faces blithe,—and more, the day is here  
When the long truce is ended, and new battle near!

79

"So now we can in our accustomed way  
Make all the Greeks our arméd valour feel:  
Wilt not, then, arm and come with us to-day?  
Thou didst of yore, thyself the first reveal  
To strike for Troy, and then no Greeks would stay,  
But all before thy might away would steal  
In fear and flight. And Hector now hath moved  
We go beyond our moats and have our valour proved."

80

Just as a famished lion, in search of prey  
Grown weary, lays him down to seek repose,  
Only to shake his mane in savage way  
And leap up fierce, if any beast come close—  
A hart or bull which might his hunger stay,  
And only craves its flesh; so Troil rose,  
Hearing war's fortunes did again commence;  
And vigour in his flaming heart ran back intense.

81

He raised his head and, "Brother," then he said,  
"That I am weak and ill is more than true;  
But see, I rise new-strengthened from my bed  
So much my wish for war doth courage brew!  
And, risen, let me swear, if e'er I sped  
With hard, strong heart to war, or Greek I slew—  
Now I shall fight as ne'er I fought before  
So doth my hate for Greece now move me  
more and more!"

82

Whence these words came, Deifebo well knew;  
So first he did some little comfort say;  
Added his brothers waited Troil, too;  
Said, therefore, then he might not more delay  
To comfort him, and bade him short adieu.  
The prince sighed more then in his wonted way;  
While swift the other to his brothers sped  
And soon the whole of Troil's actions he had said.

83

And they believed the tale most readily  
For actions they had seen; but all agreed  
Never to mention what they'd chance to see,  
Lest they offend. To aid him all decreed,  
And so they bade their ladies presently  
All go to visit him, and maidens lead  
With them to sing and dance in merry fête  
So they might Troil's griefs more early dissipate.

84

Soon ladies thronged the room of Troilo,  
Who with their songs and music filled the place:  
Polyxena stood there with eyes aglow  
And like an angel in her beauteous face;  
There the fair Helen sat, a radiant show,  
And there Cassandra with prophetic grace;  
Old Hecuba, Andromaca, and more,—  
Ladies to him akin, about his chamber floor.

85

Each, as she could would sweetly comfort speak,  
And each inquired what ill had caused his pain;  
He answered naught but merely gazed on weak,—  
At her or her,—while in his mind rose plain,  
Fairer than all of these, sweet Criseis meek;  
And then he turned him to his sighs again;  
Scarce conscious of the beauties gathered there,  
Of their sweet music, or habiliments so fair.

86

Cassandra, who by chance had heard the tale  
Which late Deifebo his brothers told,  
As if in jest, because he seemed so frail,  
Saw fit then sad-faced Troilo to scold:  
“Fie, brother, fie! ’Tis Love that makes thee pale,  
I see it well,—and takes thee now in hold,  
Yes, curséd Love, by whom we are undone,  
As we who will can see, though him we may not shun.

87

“And so, since Love must have his helpless prey,  
Thou art enamoured of a noble dame!  
’Tis a fine wench that makes thee waste away,  
A rogue priest’s daughter—royal, princely game!  
An evil wizard’s child! Low-born, I say!  
And thee, son to a king of honoured name,  
Love grants a life of plaint and dismal woe  
Because from thee Dame Criseis had of late to go!”

88

Hearing his sister thus, grieved Tröilo,—  
Now, since he heard the name of her despised  
Whom more he loved than all on earth below,  
Now, since he knew Cassandra was advised  
Of his kept secret,—how he could not know!  
He mused, “Some oracle hath her apprised,—  
Some god’s response.” Then to himself he said  
“And ’twill seem true if I keep quiet, here in bed.”

89

So he began: “Cassandra, thy desire,  
Ere other folk, all secrets to perceive  
And, with thy fancies, into them inquire,  
Hath many a time ere this brought thee to grieve;  
Silence for thee would be a wisdom higher,  
Than wantonly to prate things none believe;  
Then go on talking in thy prejudice,—  
The things thou sayst I do not know of Criseis.

90

“Yet, since thy prate must e’er abundant flow,  
I’ll do a thing I never did before,  
Thy beastliness I will thee patent show;  
Thou sayest sov’reign love for Criseis sore  
Hath made me pale; thou wouldst full shame and woe  
Turn on me, too; then let me now deplore  
That, in this, Phœbus did not show thee true,—  
Thou art deceived quite, deceived through and through!

91

Never was Criseis so in my desire:  
No one that ever lied in Heaven’s despite  
Hath lied as thou, Cassandra; go, retire  
And pray that Heaven bring thee back to right!  
Yet, were it true—what thy words would require,  
I swear upon my honour as a knight  
I would have died at Priam’s own decree  
Rather than let men take sweet Criseis from me.



92

"And that they take her from my arms away  
The king would have forbid, the king who bore  
That Paris here his Helen brought to stay,  
A stolen wife,—whence grew our evils more,—  
So curb thy tongue; yet be assured, I pray,  
That I did Criseis' going much deplore,  
Because is Criseis not in every deed  
Worthy of any lord e'er made by Heaven's rede?

93

"I will not of her beauty idly speak,  
Though that surpasses beauteousness supreme,  
As all men judge who truth in judgment seek,—  
A flower broken soon doth withered seem;  
But, if we touched her gentillesse meek,  
Which thou dost censure and as evil deem,  
Then all men would agree 'tis truth I say  
And all deny thy claim; so why allege it, pray?

94

"Wherever virtue is, is gentillesse;  
This no one will deny who that can know,  
And both these charms in her themselves express  
If e'er cause in effect itself may show.  
In such a greeting must come my redress,  
In parting, that content *you* still may go  
A fool! To gossip still of folks most free,  
Prattling of what *you* know not, in full liberty!

95

"If I am not deceived by what I've seen,—  
And what still others say,—then honesty  
Greater than hers ne'er is and ne'er hath been,  
Nor greater soberness and modesty;  
And certain her appearance shows them clean;  
And, who looks well, may likewise see  
She is, as fits, a quiet shamefast dame,  
And these in her are signs of nobleness and fame.

96

“In all her acts her prudence proves in season,  
And in her talk, which ever shows most sound  
And wise, and full of lofty sense and reason;  
And in her, high true loyalty I found,  
When her old father for his caitiff treason  
Made her excuses, for in tears she frowned  
And, with her queenly high and true disdain,  
She spake such solemn chiding as to make it plain.

97

“And her fair customs are so clearly known  
They have no need at all, it doth appear,  
Of any man’s defense,—not e’en mine own:  
In all the world there is no chevalier,  
However apt in courtesy up grown,  
Whom she’d not check-mate in his knightly gear  
Of courtesy and high magnificence,—  
Except that, being dame, she lacks the skill to fence.

98

“These things I know because I have been there  
Where with her grace so high she honoured me  
That kings, who hold in state a royal chair,  
Had been embarrassed by her courtesy,  
Had they perceived her lofty, gracious air,  
And felt confused like men of low degree:  
If then she always hath been sweet and meek,  
Fame should her virtues with all praises speak.

99

“What more, Cassandra, do you yet demand  
A lady have? Blood royal, crown, and ball?—  
All are not kings who sceptres hold in hand  
Or robes of purple wear imperial;  
Oft have you heard most genuine wisdom call,  
“That man is king who doth by virtue stand,  
Not by his might!” And if she, too, could be,  
Dost not thou think she were as royal dame as thee?

100

“Nay, she would better wear a crown, I say,  
Than thou; yea, hark thou well and understand;  
She would not be, as thou, a trifling fay  
Ready to bite all persons near at hand.  
Would God had made me worthy of the may  
To make her mine—as thou dost claim, so bland,  
The lady is! For her I’d deem a prize,  
However Dame Cassandra did her rank despise!

101

“Avaunt you now, to your own evil cess,—  
You cannot talk; go spin and learn to weave;  
Through woman’s work repair your filthiness;  
And others’ virtues unassail’d leave.  
What woe it is, what more than wretchedness,  
If in her vanity a fool believe  
She can attack what others have approved,  
And then, unlistened to, be deep with anger moved!”

102

Cassandra kept her hushed, and willingly  
She would, that time, have been far elsewhere;  
Back to the ladies she made haste to flee  
And, mingled with them, kept a silence rare;  
Then, having got where Troil could not see,  
She left for Priam’s palace full of care:  
And ne’er she visited the prince again,—  
He had not welcomed her nor listened kindly then!

103

The others, Helen, Hecuba, all praised  
What Troilo had said; then, gradually,  
They gently comforted that youth so dazed,  
With words of cheer and gay festivity:  
Then all, together, left him less amazed,  
Each turning to her own abode, heart free;  
And more times then to visit him they came  
While still in bed he kept him wearying and lame.

104

So grief continued for our Troilo  
Until he grew inured and, patiently,  
Was able more to bear his pain and woe;  
Then once again the prince most ardently  
His valour gainst the Greeks desired to show;  
And that restored his old strength presently,—  
Strength he had lost, what time he sore complained  
Through the excess of pain he had so long sustained.

105

And then, too, Criseis had writ him now;  
Who, that she loved him more than ever, swore;  
And her excuses, which she did endow  
With reasons why she had not come before,  
And her demands he further time allow  
For her return (which was not evermore!)—  
All moved him so they gave him hope again  
To see his Criseis—though, alack, he knew not when!

106

So he made battle once more on his foes  
And all his worth in arms did demonstrate;  
And all those sighs, and other bitter woes  
The Greeks, he felt, had done upon him late  
He sold them dear, when he renewed his blows;  
But nothing would thereon his wrath abate;  
Until destroying death should bring him peace,  
And from both love and fighting grant his soul release.



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## CANTO EIGHT

---

HE <sup>I</sup>grew inured to pain, as we have said,  
And only seemed to draw more valiant breath,  
When higher grief than pen hath e'er portrayed  
Fell upon Troy in mighty Hector's death,—  
In whom his sire and brothers all had laid  
Their sov'reign hopes, their strength,  
    their last of faith,—  
The walls and gates of Troy,—a cureless blow  
That kept them all lamenting long in pain and woe.

<sup>2</sup>  
Yet e'en for this he'd not from Love depart,  
However much, then, hope might seem to lose;  
Rather he sought by every means and art,—  
As still among fond lovers is the use,—  
To have again what once had pleased his heart,  
All that sweet essence which from love ensues;  
And that she came not pardoned Criseis,  
Deeming the cause of her delay was this—or this.

<sup>3</sup>  
And letters more he wrote her presently,  
Which told her how he felt by night or day,  
Praising sweet times of cherished memory.  
Oft of her pledge to come he'd tell the may;  
And oft he chided, though most courteously,  
Her sad postponement and her long delay,  
Through Pandar, whom he always sent to her  
Whene'er times set for truce or treaty would recur.

4

And likewise often he had thought to go,  
 Dressed in some pilgrim's habit gray;  
 But how to counterfeit he did not know,  
 Or how conceal the truth by such a way;  
 And much, conviction did within him grow  
 He could not find a good excuse to say  
 If ever he were known and recognized,  
 Why he had gone in that strange garb disguised.

5

And nothing more than words came from her now—  
 Fair, but their promises, had no effect;  
 So that his mind began more to allow  
 These were but tricks, and he did much suspect  
 Truth for the bitter truth (as oft, I trow,  
 It chanceth him, whoe'er without defect  
 Will look into the things that sway his mind  
 Because, through seeing clear, no man e'er yet  
     went blind!)

6

That new love was the cause, at length he knew,  
 She sent such frequent and such reckless lies;  
 Then full conviction in the poor prince grew  
 'Twas not her father's falsehoods,—crafty, wise,—  
 Nor filial cares that kept her from his view;  
 And further proof he asked not for his eyes,  
 He knew the truth as well as truth is known  
 Through that dread spectre which his evil dream  
     had shown.

7

And that new love made faith in him recede,—  
 As happens oft with those that hope in vain  
 And show at first an all too willing creed  
 In things that, while they love, increase their pain.  
 Yet that this was the truth of Diomed,  
 As erewhile he had feared, he learned more plain  
 Soon after, by a chance that took away  
 All semblance of excuse; and he believed that day.



## 8

While standing, still in torment, pensively,  
His heart yet timid and with love distraught,  
He heard the rabble calling noisily—  
That Greeks and Trojans had new battle fought,—  
Deifebo had met right valiantly  
With Diomed and now his vestment brought,  
A captured prize worth showing all of Troy,  
And here the victor marched in solemn pomp and joy.

## 9

This coat was borne before Deifebo  
Throughout all Troy and came to Troil's view,  
Who praised with others the triumphant show,  
Then, closer it to see, the vestment drew;  
And, as he moved his eyes quick to and fro,  
Gazing at all, he found new cause for rue,  
For on the breast of it a clasp of gold,  
Set as a buckle there, the prince chanced to behold.

## 10

And that he recognized immediately  
As one he gave to parting Criseis  
The morning that he bore her company  
Beyond the gates, in those last hours of bliss  
Which followed their last night of revelry,—  
That last night they had met to love and kiss;  
But now he only said, "My dream was true,  
I see—and all my long suspicion, all my thoughts of rue!"

## 11

He parted thence, and sent for Pandaro,  
Who as of old now thither kindly came;  
And straight the prince began to cry his woe,  
Bewailing all the love he bore the dame,  
And, how he learned her treason, gan to show,  
Nor sought to longer shield his Criseis' name;  
Mourning so bitter in his mighty grief  
He only thought that death could bring him sure relief.

12

And, as he wept, the prince began to say:  
"O Criseis mine, where is thy loyalty?  
Thy faith? thy love? desire of fervid ray?  
Where are those gracious favours promised me  
When we two parted and thou wentst away?  
Doth Diomed now have them all from thee?  
And I, who loved thee more, through thy deceit  
Must I be left to weep my trouble and defeat?

13

"Who will hereafter trust in any vow,  
Have faith in Love or woman ever more  
Seeing such perjury as I see now?  
Nay, I knew not that any woman bore  
A heart so rigid-hard as that which thou  
Dost bear, letting another enter at that door  
Whence Troil is dismissed, who loved thee so,  
Waited and was deceived and came to utter woe!

14

"And hadst thou, too, no other jewelry  
On thy new lover careless to bestow—  
On Diomed—save what I gave to thee  
With many tears and in the depths of woe  
That it might be remembrancer of me,  
When thou shouldst dwell with Calchas there below?  
Nay, nothing could so move thee but vile spite—  
Some mean desire to show thy soul in truer light.

15

"Therefore I see me now expelled in scorn  
Out of thy heart, although against my will,  
Deep in my heart thy image yet is worn,—  
Thy fair face wrecking grief upon me still:  
Woe, woe is me,—in evil hour born!  
These thoughts despoil me quite, the while they kill,  
Of all my esperance for future joy,  
And are, at once, the cause of anguish and annoy.

16

“Thy heart hath wickedly discarded me,—  
Who aye in it had thought to dwell and stay,—  
And ta'en in place of me, through perfidy,  
This Diomed; but Venus hear, I pray,  
The oath I swear to bring high grief on thee  
With this my sword, when comes the first melee!  
If Heaven grant I find thy Diomed  
And let me use my strength in one victorious deed!

17

“Or let him kill me—and be dear to thee!—  
Still, 'tis my hope, true Justice and divine  
Will take fair view of this my agony,  
And likewise see what evil sins are thine!  
O Jove supreme, in whom is remedy  
For injured Right, and from whom, at thy sign,  
High Virtue rises, lives, and moves her fair,  
Are thy just eyes completely turned now elsewhere?

18

“Do now thy fervent thunderbolts repose?  
And of thine eyes are they no longer seen,  
The sins of men—our griefs and human woes?  
O very Light, O Lucid Rays serene,  
Through whom the earthly mind rejoicing knows,  
Cast into darkness her in whom have been  
All lies and treasons, all deceits and guile,  
Show her no pardon more—not e'en a moment's while!

19

“O Pandar mine, who blamédst so of late  
The faith I had in dreams and augury,  
Now canst thou see what clear truths they relate,—  
Thy Criseis makes thee trust them certainly!  
The gods, to mortal men compassionate,  
In divers wise do show them openly  
Secrets by Heaven seen, to us unknown,  
That through their kindness  
we may fuller knowledge own.

## 20

"And sleep is one mode that the gods pursue  
In revelation, oft I have perceived,—  
With mind kept firmly on the things in view;  
So now I wish me dead, so am I grieved  
Because naught waits me hence but bitter rue,—  
No solace hence, no joy with mirth inweaved!  
Yet, through thy counsel, I consent to pause  
And mid my foes,—in arms,—await death's hateful jaws.

## 21

"God send before me, then, this Diomed  
When first I issue to renew the fight!  
Let this great wish my sorrows supersede,  
So I may make him taste my weapon's might,  
May make him rue with death his caitiff deed  
There in the fields; nor care I, then, what wight  
May slay poor me, if only first he die  
And I, on reaching hell, find him in misery!"

## 22

Pandaro listened, torn twixt grief and rue;  
Felt all was true; and knew not what to say:  
Love of his friend in one direction drew;  
Shame in another bade him flee away  
As all of Criseis' treason came to view,—  
Somehow, at least, his cousin's guilt repay;  
But what and how, he could not clear perceive,  
And love and shame both made him sorer yet to grieve.

## 23

But in the end he spake, mid weeping sore:  
"Troil, I know not what I ought to say,  
Rightly thy lady's foulness to deplore  
Or give her due of blame in proper way;  
Her falseness I'll not try excusing more;  
I'll never wish to go where she doth stay!  
The things I did, I did for love of thee  
Smirching my own good name quite unreservédly!

24

“When once I pleased thee, I felt pleasure true;  
But in the ill done now I cannot act,  
For, like thee, I am overcome with rue:  
Yet, if I saw a means to mend the fact,  
Be certain I should quick that means pursue:  
Only I pray that God, whose high impact  
Makes all things turn or be, shall punish her  
That in so false a wise she may not hence bestir.”

25

Great was their lamentation and complaint,  
But Fortune kept the road of destiny;  
Criseis loved Diomed now sans constraint,  
And Troilo wept on in misery:  
The Greek praised Heav’n with praises never faint;  
The Trojan grieved on unconsolédly;  
In all Troy’s battles Troil gladly fought  
And more than others always Diomed he sought.

26

And when they met, as so about he ranged,  
They cried out taunts of caitiff villainy,  
Or mighty warlike blows the two exchanged,  
Hurtling together both, most savagely,  
Their swords in hand, and for that heart estranged  
They sold each other hate most furiously;  
Yet Fortune had not so in Heav’n disposed  
Either should do the deed he for himself proposed.

27

At divers times the wrath of Troilo  
Worked on the Greeks such skilful hurt and hate  
That few did then against the sad knight go  
Who did not meet, unhorsed, their death and fate  
(If e’er they paused to let him strike his blow!).  
And, after long he so for death did wait,  
And after he a thousand men did slay,  
Achilles smote and slew him wretchedly one day.

28

So ended then the love of Troilo  
 For Criseis, in evil hour conceived;  
 So ended then his more than wretched woe,  
 Wherein, in equal wise, none ever grieved;  
 So ended then that splendid light and show  
 Which e'en the throne deserved, as men believed;  
 So ended Troil's faith in vanity;  
 So hope in Criseis false forever ceased to be!

29

O youths in whom, with life's increasing age,  
 Love comes with all too amorous desire,  
 I pray by Heav'n ye bravely do assuage  
 The first swift flames of Love's perverting fire!  
 Behold how mad poor Troil's love did rage,  
 Which you to show, my verses did aspire,  
 O read them now with free and open heart!  
 If ye would not trust lightly in false Amor's art!

30

Maidens are fickle (as young men should see);  
 Delight in many lovers; estimate  
 Their beauties high as glasses; haughtily  
 Take much vain glory in their youthful state,—  
 The which the more its charms and pleasaunce be,  
 The higher in themselves they name its rate;  
 Virtue they never know, nor sense of mind;  
 They are as volatile as leaves blown in the wind!

31

And oft, because they spring of lofty lineage  
 Or many grandsires can enumerate,  
 They think they should be favoured in Love's rage,—  
 Count lovers more, than dames of lesser state;  
 They think pure custom is a mere outrage,  
 Tilt noses, and in scorn all good berate.—  
 O loathe these, youths! Hold them for mean and vile,  
 For they are beasts, not gentle ladies free from guile!

32

A perfect lady hath more true desire  
To be beloved, and to love doth delight;  
Clear she discerns what must be shunned like fire,  
Bravely avoids, elects, foresees what things are right,  
Keeps faith and promise, as the gods require.  
Her kind pursue; yet not if she be light  
Or hope a hasty choice.—Not all are wise,  
And often, when mature, they are the less to prize.

33

Have foresight then and pity Troilo,  
And even for yourselves compassion bear;  
Demean you well; and with a piteous woe  
For him beseech the god of Love in prayer,  
That he full peace may in that region know  
Where'er he dwell; and pray Love's grace and care  
Be granted you to make you love aright,  
Lest ye, too, perish wretched through  
some wanton's spite.





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## CANTO NINE

---

I

**G**LAD times are wont to be the cause  
Of soft-writ verse, O song, my piteous canto!  
But thee, neath stern affliction's hard-forced laws,  
Love drew from out a soul deep sunk in woe,—  
Gainst nature so it gives the understanding pause,  
Unless some hidden virtue aimed the blow  
At our transfixéd heart, inspired and stirred  
Through our sweet lady's potent worth and word.

2

She, as I know from oft felt sentiment,  
Can make me naught or she can make me great—  
Whiche'er she choose; and so the argument  
Of all the tragic story I relate  
Was born, methinks; and so I am content  
That more from this than grief I did create  
Thee, little song; but, howe'er that may be,  
We're both come to the noble end desired by me.

3

We now have reached the port which long we sought,  
There by the rocks, there on the open sea;  
With wind and tempest we have sailed and fought,  
Seeking, amid the sea's uncertainty,  
That pure star's sign with light and radiance fraught  
(Worthy our reverence in high degree),  
Which makes our every aim to bearings true,  
And came and comes so timely to our clearer view.

4

Here, then, I think we may our anchors throw  
And make end to our ways of journeying;  
Here we may breathe those thanks with love aglow  
Returning pilgrims always ought to bring  
To her who guided them through weal and woe;  
There, by the shore so near, with garlanding  
And with the many other honours due  
We will our love's good ship adorn before her view!

5

Then thou, somewhat reposed, mayst presently  
Unto my soul's kind lady freely go:  
O happy thou, who shalt my bright love see,  
A thing I cannot do, (whence springs my woe!).  
And, if her hands accept thee festively,  
Then in a humble wise, and soft and low,  
Commend me to her noble virtues high,  
In which alone I can my heart's salvation spy.

6

And, in the mournful weeds thou now dost wear,  
I pray thee go and make my lady see,  
In Troil's griefs, what ills my life doth bear—  
The woes, the sighs, the complaints of misery  
And other things that caused, and cause, my care  
Since her clear radiant eyes are hid from me  
Because she parted, too, and went away  
Although I only lived when near me she would stay.

7

And if thou find she listen kind to thee,—  
Or if her angel face show pitying sign,  
Or if she sigh for my hard misery,—  
Pray her return and prove her heart benign,—  
When pleasures her, or else command from me  
My soul depart and be no longer mine,  
For where she is, my soul and heart must go,  
And better than such life 'twould be to die in woe!

Beware thou do not try thine embassy  
Without the aid of Love, lest thou shouldst fail  
Through misadventure that would fall on thee,—  
Or lest, sans him, thou to no good avail.  
If thou go with him, thou shalt honoured be;  
Then haste; while I in prayer Apollo hail,  
Beseeching first he win thee ready ear,  
Then send thee back to me with answer of good cheer!

*Finis*



## IL FILOSTRATO

### NOTES ON THE TRANSLATION

THE translator has adopted a position of rather great flexibility with regard to pronunciation and spelling in the use of the several proper names Criseis, Deifebo, Pandaro, and Troilo. From the latter two, as well as sometimes from Diomedes, the final vowel syllable is frequently omitted. The name Criseis is usually to be pronounced with equal stress upon the first and third syllables, but metrical reading will require, every now and then, a distinct accent upon the second syllable. In rarer instances the second syllable will have so completely to be slurred as to make Criseis seem a word of but two syllables. Deifebo is most commonly to be accented on the second syllable, but should be, by exception, once or twice given stress in the third. Pandaro usually takes stresses on the first and third; now and then the second syllable is given main accent. Troilo likewise usually stresses syllables one and three; once in a great while, however, its second syllable is to be distinctly accented. In all these several pronunciations the reader will readily be guided by the iambic structure of the verse.

### CANTO I

#### *Stanza and Line*

1, 1. The lady addressed here by the poet is Boccaccio's own mistress, Maria d' Aquino, the natural daughter of Robert of Anjou, king of Naples from 1309 to 1343. She was married to a gentleman of her father's court, but that fact seems not to have stood in the way of an *amour* with the poet. In Italian poetry she is the Fiammetta of Boccaccio's sonnets. When *Il Filostrato* was written, Boccaccio was away from Maria, probably at home in Florence. The lady is again addressed in Canto III, stanza 2.

*Stanza and Line*

1, 5-8. The original, beginning with *ma amore*, is more accurately to be translated: "But love recently has made me change my ancient, long used custom, since I have been, lady, enamoured of thee."

2, 3-4. These two lines, beginning with *tu sei* say more accurately: "Thou art the transmontane star which I follow in order to come to port."

3, 6. Accurately this line reads: "and how before she had been kind to him."

6, 7-8. Accurately: "I live afar from the sweetest pleasure that ever creature had in his desire."

17, 4-5. *ma si tenne . . . usati*. "was held in each temple in the accustomed manner."

20, 3. The title Prince has been consistently adopted with Troilo and Hector although Boccaccio never speaks of either with the title. That the Italian poet, however, was deeply conscious of his hero's royal blood is frequently apparent, as in Canto IV, stanza 69 and again in Canto VII, stanza 87 seq. To the translator the title does not seem, in Romance, out of keeping for the son of a king.

23, 8. "Annoy" is so used as a noun eight times by Shakespeare.

24, 3-8. Accurately: "'Tis Jove I name, a very deity, from whom comes all grace, and I live in repose myself; and, although I may be amused in seeing others in it, I keep myself carefully away from the troubled course (i. e. of love), and I like to laugh at the fools whom I know not whether to call lovers, or lunatics."

29, 5-8. Literally: "Nor did he recall the outrage he had said of the servants of him (i. e. Love) nor of the dart that ran into his heart was he aware, although it did not sting of truth."

30, 2-3 (Translation, line 5). *senza dire . . . cotanti*. Accurately: "without saying what cause held him there so much."

32, 8. *che altro lo stringesse*. "how differently he was constrained."

32, 7. *ove volesse*. "where he wished."

34. *gran ventura* (line 3) has been liberally expanded here.

39, 5-6. The original *la qual . . . i tuoi piè* is, of course, "which lies prostrate beneath thy feet."

49. It has seemed only appropriate in the translation of a romance of chivalry to use the word knight in reference to the various men involved in the story. The use is, hereafter, frequent.

51, 6-7. *gia ora . . . siamo*. "he is already come where we



*Stanza and Line*

are." The translation used in the text proper was, of course, suggested by *morder*, 'to bite'.

55, 6. *Da Colui mossa* is, more narrowly, "of Him (i. e. Love) moved."

56, 1-2. The translation of these two lines has but negatively treated the original, which, viewed closely, would give: "I shall become, lady, if thou dost this, like a flower in a fresh meadow in springtime."

57, 8. Translation of *in cento*, "a hundredfold," has been omitted.

## CANTO II

4, 3-4. *Se la nostra . . . in piacere*. "If our friendship, as it used to be, is still a pleasure to thee."

21, 6-8. Literally: "Because she is worth it truly, if I can appreciate her customs, her magnanimity, her worth and beauty."

22, 5-8. *nè è sì alta . . . che si potesse*. Literally: "nor is there anything so high that she could not assume it before any king whatsoever and that he would not give his heart to her to bring her to an end, were that but possible."

37, 7-8. Literally: "I have perceived that it delights a man so made so beyond measure that he cannot free himself from it."

51, 4. *umile e soave*, i. e., "lowly and gentle," I have translated "fair indeed."

54, 5-6. Literally: "And to thee who art in sombre apparel, although still a girl, it is permitted to love."

56, 4-8. *fu in calere . . . a cantar seco*. Literally: "it was Troilo's desire that with him I should go through the shady woods disporting myself; there, when we had seated ourselves, he began to talk with me of Love and then to himself, to sing of him."

64, 8. *amara*, "bitter," has been left untranslated.

65, 8. *nè sì . . . nuda*, "nor so void of pity," has been omitted.

89, 4. *dove ch' io mi cuoco*. "Wherein I cook," seems too crude for presentation in English.

133, 7-8. *I' non . . . mio fratello*. Accurately: "I can do no other, I shall do that which thou hast imposed, my dear brother."

142, 7-8. The plural verbs *avrete* and *dovrete* make translation with "you," i. e., Criseis and Troilo, necessary.

## CANTO III

*Stanza and Line*

2, 6. The lady addressed is, of course, Maria d' Aquino, see note on Canto I, stanza 1.

20, 4. *con quella alle prese*. This seems to mean "with her love at stake" because it was not yet fully won. Literally it would be more accurately: "with her in the capture."

31, 6-7. *con piacevole . . . Gli disse*. More simply: "said with pleasing speech to him."

52, 5-6. Literally: "And he knows well that Love cooks him more ways than he did first in his desire."

61, 4-6. *Ben ti dico . . . son ora*. Literally: "I tell thee well I was never in Love's nets as I am now."

66, 5-8. *Deb chi . . . gran piacere?* Literally: "What woman would refrain from dying by degrees, if she could not otherwise, in order to have even a little of so great a pleasure?"

69, 8. Literally: "Which, when they had written to one another, had been left unsaid."

## CANTO IV

23, 3-8. Literally: "Because my mind of itself, even if my weak memory does not remember them, will know how to recount well the grief, oppressed with which it feels sad for thy parting, without any aid from thee, for thou art the cause of its bitter sorrow (bite)."

41, 7-8. *ma non dormio . . . risentio*. Here the translation is most free. Accurately it should read: "But he slept hardly any time before he awoke again."

47, 7. *da colei che mi disface*. Not "of the dame I woo," but "from her who undoes me."

56, 7. *a chi è stato felice*, "to him who has been happy," has been omitted.

68, 7. Observe that *partito* has been translated with "means" plural. The translation of the last four lines of the stanza, with the verbs pluralized, is then almost literal.

99, 7-8. "does it (i. e. mischance) wish these sighs, or laments, or what does it ask? I do not have enough if he commands through these."

136, 1. *vecchio*, "old," has been omitted.

160, 6-7. *li sospir . . . increscerebbe*. More correctly: "the sighs so violent that thou dost utter, and thou shouldst weary of them."

164, 4. *de' nobili*. Not merely "men's," but "of noble men."

## CANTO V

*Stanza and Line*

40, 3. *Serpedone*. Observe that, according to Canto IV, stanza 3, Sarpedon has been taken prisoner by the Greeks. Boccaccio has in the interim made no mention of his ransom or exchange.  
44, 5-6. *rosa di . . . il salutasse*. Literally: "calling her thorn-rose and that she should greet him."

## CANTO VI

11, 6-7. *sì come . . . di lei*. Accurately "exactly as he was first enamoured of her."

27, 7-8. Literally: "But for every anxiety incurred for me I pray good reward be returned to thee." Observe that it is Criseis first who uses the familiar pronouns *tu*, *te*, etc., in the conversation with Diomedes. Throughout his speech, stanzas 14 to 25, the Greek has used the formal pronouns of address, *voi*, *vostro*, etc., and verbs in the second person plural.

## CANTO VII

6, 4-6. *e tutti . . . Venieno*. Literally: "having looked at all those who came from the direction of the shore."

10, 7-8. "volcano wind" is translated from *di Mongibello . . . il vento*.

11, 7. Literally: "But Troilo made delay for two hours more."

89, 7. Literally: "Thou dost vent thy preachings in the presence of everybody."

92, 8. *qual vuoi sia fatto*. Accurately: "of whatever sort thou wish him made."

94, 5-8. Literally these four lines seem to read: "But in the end it is necessary to come to such a greeting, if only to leave content the fool who talks so much of everybody without knowing what it is she babbles." Strangely enough *costei* (line 7), which is here used derisively in reference to Cassandra and which I have translated "a fool," is used reverently of Griseida in the very next stanza (line 3). Boccaccio evidently thinks of Troilo, lost in his excitement and rage, half forgetting the actual presence of Cassandra and so speaking of her in the third person.

For the "you" observe the note on stanza 99.

95, 4. *E se'l ver odo*, "And if I hear the truth," has been omitted.

99, 1. *chiederete*. Troilo, in his desire to treat Cassandra coldly and witheringly, adopts here the formal form of the second person.

101, 1. *andate*. Observe note on stanza 99.

## CANTO VIII

*Stanza and Line*

8, 5-8. *con uno . . . assai gioioso*. Accurately: "with an ornamented coat seized from Diomedes, who was gravely wounded, Deifebo was returning, triumphing in such a prize and inwardly glad enough."

25, 3-6. More prosaically: "She loved Diomedes with all her desire, and Troilo wept; Diomedes praised himself of God (i. e., felt himself blest of Heaven), and Troilo on the contrary grieved."

28, 6. *Che lui servava al solio reale*. I take this line to mean that Troilo's brilliant qualities made him deserving of the royal throne, now that the great Hector was dead. Simply translated it would be: "which preserved him for the royal throne."

## CANTO IX

2, 1. *Costei*, i. e., Maria d' Aquino, Boccaccio's own mistress.

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